

4/SS

FRONT: VNRs • 4 / MUSIC: JUNO WEEK IN PICTURES • 34 / FILM: THE FOG OF WAR • 64

EDMONTON'S 100% INDEPENDENT NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

VUEWEEKLY

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THEATRE NETWORK
BRINGS ARMAGEDDON TO EDMONTON

ALL CLEAR

[BY PAUL MATWYCHUK • 7]

ALSO:

HIV EDMONTON
NEWSLETTER INSIDE

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ON THE COVER

The last Eugene Stickland play to hit Edmonton, *Excavations*, was about an archaeologist digging up dinosaurs. In his latest, and possibly last, play, *All Clear*, it's the human race that's about to become extinct—the victim of a menacing envelope of bright orange fog • 7



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yourVUE

Smith deserves support

It looks like Chris Smith has been sold out by local musicians who haven't yet backed his call for a strike because they are not getting paid union scale at JunoFest ["Banned on the run," Music Notes, April 1-7].

This is alarming and I hope the community wakes up in time to support him before he is blacklisted after so many years propping up the music industry in Canada with his work. That's all I have time for on this subject. The right thing to do seems pretty clear to me, especially for any of those musicians who claim to be "political."

—KATHLEEN YEARWOOD (VIA E-MAIL)

"Cougar" comment criticized

First of all, let me say that I read you

mag every week. It's full of interesting and informative articles. Thank you.

However, when I read your review of the new Overtime restaurant ["Senses working Overtime," March 25-31], I was very offended at David DiCenzo's comment about "done-up cougars." His comment displays disrespect for our age and gender. In addition, he does not comment on the almost assuredly "done-up" appearance of younger women, thereby further insulting age and gender differences. No mention is made of the men's appearance, you will note. The term "cougar" is no longer used in a positive, encouraging way. We can't help it if we are aging—most of us try to do so with grace—but it doesn't help matters when we are written about with such apparent dismissal and distaste. Life is to be enjoyed and celebrated no

matter what our age.

I hope DiCenzo uses more thought and consideration when writing about people. —INEZ ANNE HOVDE, EDMONTON

Shiva article asks wrong questions

The article on Dr. Vandana Shiva by Malcolm Azania ["Grocery shopping with Vandana Shiva," April 1-7] had one point in common with most articles featuring opinions, or people with opinions, about the power of huge corporations. It showed us a faceless organization.

Corporations are not buildings, corporations are not a conglomerate of companies and obviously, corporations are not huge dragons invading our

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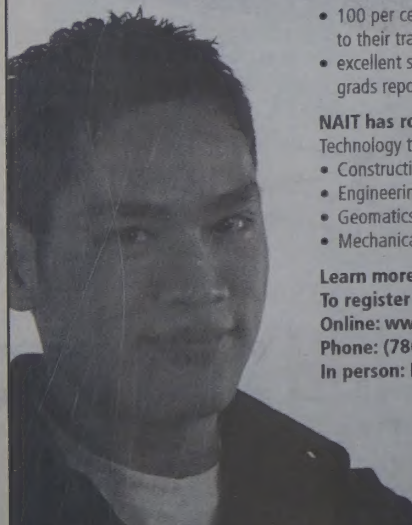
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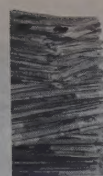
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media jungle

BY JAMES ELFORD

VNR takes all

If you thought *The Onion* or *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* were your best sources of fake news, think again: the Bush administration is giving them some tough competition, thanks to a "video news release" (VNR) in support of its new medicare law that many critics say blurs the boundary between advertising and propaganda.

The VNR, distributed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, puts what some might call a biased spin on the Bush administration's medical plan. Sample scenes include a crowd cheering while Bush signs the law into effect, and another where an elderly customer is told by a pharmacist that the new law "helps you better afford your medications." "It sounds like a good idea," says the

matter because of a concern that the VNRs might violate a prohibition on using funds for "covert propaganda" and other government materials that are misleading about their origin. This prohibition came about after the U.S. State Department under the Reagan administration was discovered to be hiring consultants to author op-ed pieces and articles in support of their Central American policy back in 1987.

This incident is the latest in a long line of deceptions that the Bushites seem almost addicted to. They've ranged from minor and relatively innocuous episodes like George W. presenting troops with a fake turkey for a staged Thanksgiving photo op to far more serious allegations about justifications for the invasion of Iraq. This reliance on fakery extends beyond turkeys and journalists to the use of fake firefighters—actors used in the slurry of images thrown together for the 9/11-themed Bush campaign ads that some have deemed exploitative. (It should be noted, by the way, that the International Association of Fire Fighters has endorsed John Kerry for president.)

As for VNRs, they've been around since at least the 1980s and are used widely by both government and business as sort of video press releases. The American Dental Association uses them, and even has their own, pre-

Sometimes clearly identified as a message from whatever interest group is releasing it and sometimes not, VNRs tread an ethical grey area.

customer, to which the pharmacist replies, "A very good idea."

But this kind of blatant drum beating wouldn't be so bad, or unexpected, if it weren't for the way it was packaged. Instead of being clearly marked as an advertisement from the government, the piece was not only designed to look like a news story, but the government even got the company that made the video, Home Front Communications, to hire someone to portray a journalist.

Karen Ryan, a freelance reporter/actor/public relations professional (her title varies depending upon who you ask) read the script prepared by the government and signs off at end of the video without indicating that the VNR is anything but a legitimate news story. Even if they don't acknowledge it, the creators of the piece likely knew that there is a substantial difference between what people heard ("In Washington, I'm Karen Ryan reporting") and a properly identified VNR ("I'm Karen Ryan reporting from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in Washington, D.C."). There's even a Spanish-language version aimed at Latino voters featuring correspondent "Alberto Garcia."

The ethical breach gets even stickier when you find out that the government also prepared scripts for news anchors to use as they introduced the video, featuring phrases like "Reporter Karen Ryan helps sort through the details" that seem designed to further its resemblance to real news. (While the video itself has aired in a number of states, including Louisiana, it's unclear if any newscasts elected to use this prepared script.)

The General Accounting Office (GAO), the nonpartisan body that functions as Congress's investigative arm, has decided to investigate the

sumably fake "reporters" presenting them. Groups like Medialink (www.medialink.com/vnr.htm) prepare television versions of corporate press releases and produce them in broadcast news style—a readymade fit for TV newscasts, and a convenient resource for producers struggling to fill air time, especially at small stations without the resources to produce enough of their own quality news. Sometimes clearly identified as a message from whatever interest group is releasing it and sometimes not, VNRs tread an ethical grey area. Airing a VNR without proper identification is like printing a press release as your own story.

VNRs have also been used in Europe but, at least in Britain, there has been some action taken to restrict their use following an emotional Greenpeace video about their efforts to prevent the dumping of Shell's Brent Spar oil platform, which led to what editors at BBC and ITN later admitted was biased coverage of the issue. Guidelines were drawn up to label VNRs as such—interestingly, the videotapes of Osama Bin Laden qualify as VNRs.

In the U.S., while a coalition of prominent journalism organizations including the Society of Professional Journalists have released a joint letter of protest against VNRs, the Radio Television News Directors Association chose to simply clarify their guidelines on the use of VNRs in newscasts. Hardly a muscular response to such an entrenched problem, and certainly open to criticism. In their battle for the hearts and minds of citizens in democracy, governments and corporations can't be entirely trusted to show all sides of a debate with any objectivity. The onus rests with the journalists—and hopefully, they'll keep that in mind before they air their next VNR. ●

land to eat our children. Any decision, good or bad, coming from a corporation is an act that was resulted from a person's decision. Yes, corporations are people, like you and me. And that is what I dislike about articles that can easily mention names of companies but can not attach one human being to that company, as if the company had life on its own. According to the article, Monsanto is the "inventor of Agent Orange," the "overlord of bio-imperialism" and the "inventor of NutraSweet." Who did that? Who were the scientists that invented Agent Orange? Who were the executives who made money on it?

Doesn't Azania think that, from a journalistic point of view, it would be interesting to ask Shiva who are these people? Doesn't he think that it would be a good idea to ask Shiva who is responsible for the enormous atrocities described? Apparently not! He seems to be comfortable in informing us that "they want a total monopoly on production." Also we now know that "they want to turn producers into biosefs." We even know that "they do not want us to be able to save seeds on our farms." Who are "they," Mr. Azania? You should have asked. Instead, you limited to give us the bizarre information that Monsanto has gone on record to say, "We were the patient, the physician and the diagnostician all in one." So now we know that Monsanto even speaks.

Even nice press people writing about nice people who are fighting for

nice causes must try to keep some "distance" from their subject and have a minimum amount of criticism. It is nice to know that Shiva has a "long black ponytail," but I would rather know why the fact that in Germany "people just come and dance over the [GM] crops" is helping them "wage a much more vigorous fight than North Americans against bio-imperialism." If she presents good arguments, we may start dancing immediately. (Let us really enjoy spring.)

Finally, to Azania's good question of "What must citizens do to force governments to oppose bio-imperialism?", Shiva had the prompt answer that involved redirecting \$400 billion in subsidies and "adopting" agriculture.

With answers like that, no wonder "they" are winning. —J.C. CUNHA, EDMONTON

Flower power

Kudos, Mr. Matwychuk, for picking up Bob the Angry Flower. It is a great strip. Hope you keep him on as long as possible. For a long time, the only reason I would pick up SEE was for Bob, and now it's Vue's turn.

Keep up the good work! —WARREN MAYNES (VIA E-MAIL)

Vue Weekly welcomes reader response, both positive and negative. Send your opinion by mail (Vue Weekly, 10303-108 Street, Edmonton, AB, T5J 1L7), by fax ((780) 426-2889) or by e-mail (letters@vue.ab.ca). Preference is given to feedback about articles in Vue Weekly; we reserve the right to edit letters for length and clarity. Please include a daytime telephone number.



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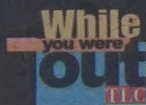


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By CHRISTOPHER WIEBE

A Bloom of one's own

There are many brilliant scenes in Don Coles's wonderful debut novel *Doctor Bloom's Story* (Knopf), moments of beauty that glow like epiphanies in the narrative. In one, narrator Nicholas Bloom is burning leaves with his wife at the bottom of their garden in the late afternoon. A robin perches on top of their spade—cocking its head, flipping its tailfeathers—and they stand transfixed before this visitor, unable to douse the fire with the spade until at last the robin flies away and, as Bloom observes, "the energy of that afternoon went with him."

Doctor Bloom's Story possesses an elegance of style and easy breadth of cultural allusion that gives it the texture of much European fiction—Sweden's Per Olov Enquist comes to mind. It records the inner life of Nicholas Bloom, a middle-aged Dutch doctor recently moved to Toronto, who is discovering his literary talent in an evening creative writing workshop. Bloom and others try to intervene when they discover their classmate Sophie is being physically abused by her husband, which she endures in the belief that it is necessary for her spiritual journey.

One of Canada's finest poets and an celebrated literary mentor, Coles has published eight collections including the GG Award-winning *Forests of the Medieval World* (1993). The 76-year-old found writing a novel liberating in unexpected ways. "Henry James called the novel 'a loose baggy monster,' which is the perfect metaphor," Coles says. "I found the form endlessly spacious; one can change the mode and mood, for example, by just decreeing the end of a chapter. Poems, by comparison, are very circumscribed."

While an undergraduate at Cambridge in the 1950s, Coles wrote two novels and left them with a literary agent. "She couldn't sell them," he explains, "which was just as well. They were very predictable, very *Tender Is the Night*." Coles then spent over a decade in Europe, learnt Swedish by translating Hjalmar Soderberg's powerful classical novel *Dr. Glas* (an exploration of medical ethics that, I think, speaks to *Doctor Bloom's Story*), eventu-

ally returning to Toronto to teach at York University. With his heavy teaching load, he felt he couldn't immerse himself in novels and turned instead to poetry, serving as senior poetry editor at the Banff Centre for 10 years. Coles espies new firsts on the horizon. "When I was at Cambridge I wrote three plays," he says, "verse dramas in the manner of Christopher Fry. I'm now working on a play."

We accept the weight our society places on the artistic prodigy at our peril. Coles's writing is like a steady voice speaking in a vast, dimly lit room: the listener cannot see all the wonderful things which time and experience have filled it with, but for those who have ears to hear, each word resounds with these many furnishings and high vaults unseen.

Balkan points

Maggie Helwig's rich second novel *Between Mountains* (Knopf) grapples with the aftermath of the 1990s wars in the Balkans. Centring on the relationship between Lili, a translator at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in the Hague, and Daniel, a Canadian journalist covering the conflict in Kosovo, the novel follows how their search for postwar justice becomes entangled with their own pasts. A novel that explores cultural mediation and the politics of ethnic identity, *Between Mountains* captures the feel of the ritualized interactions and discourse of the courtroom in the Hague and crafts an unsettlingly empathetic portrait of the war criminal, Markovic.

A longtime human rights activist, Helwig's involvement in Yugoslavia began in 1989 through peace and democracy support networks like War Resisters International, Women in Black in Serbia and the Autonomous Women's Centre in Croatia. Her subsequent visits to the former Yugoslavia put her in contact with alternative journalists and women's groups. Helwig's challenge with *Between Mountains* was to take up a partisan position and yet not make the novel a political lecture or make the other side less human. She felt keenly aware of her responsibility to her Bosnian friends to represent the period honestly. "I know what Christian Bok and others do and I like to think of my own work as a different kind of constraint-based writing," says Helwig of working with a particular historical time and place. "Constraints, in a sense, make your imagination work harder and be more productive and disciplined, because you can't do whatever you'd like."

For a writer in her early 40s, Helwig has a tremendous backlog: six

SEE PAGE 8

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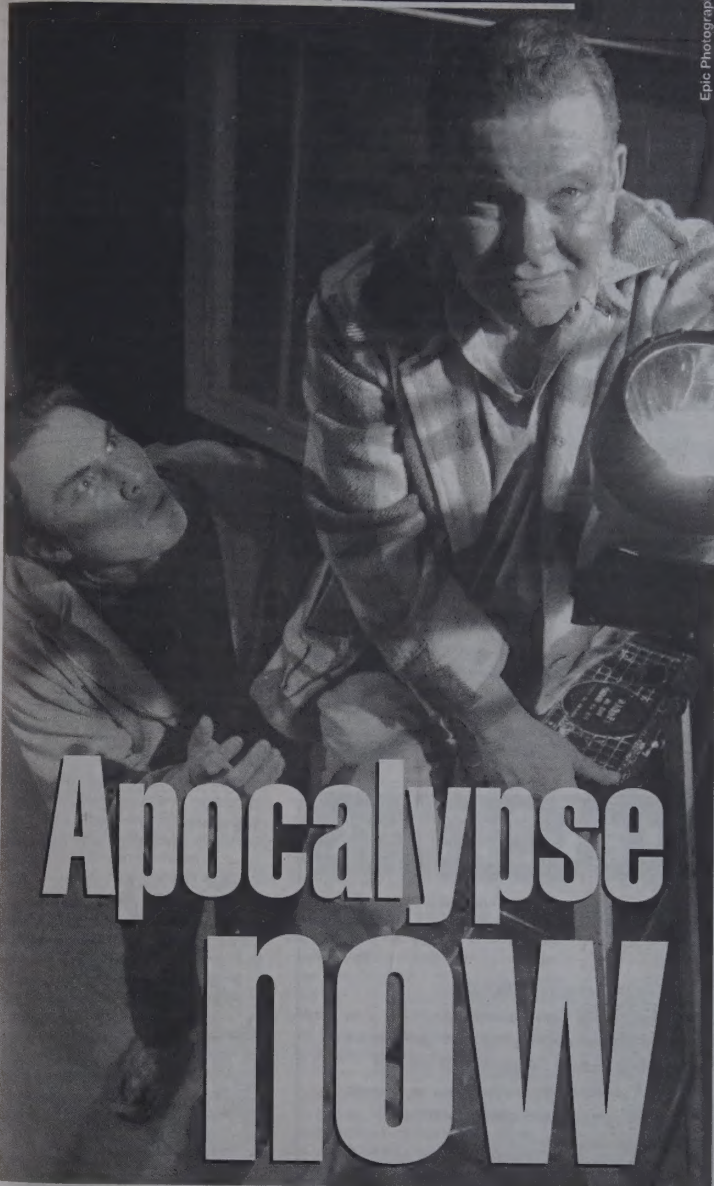
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copters and explosions keep breaking the silence and the earth has been blanketed by a thick orange fog that, if you're exposed to it, either kills you (if you lucky) or simply leaves you mentally deranged (if you're unlucky, like the Fords' teenage son Bobby).

"I asked [Eugene] what had happened," Moss says, "but he didn't give me an answer—he just said he wanted the audience to decide for themselves. And he's purposely gone out of his way to make it general. Is it nuclear? Is it chemical? Is it a meteorite? Who knows? But it's serious and it's in our backyard.... And I think what's fascinating about the play is watching this family struggle without the tools they need to get through this experience. And I love the question it brings in from the land of existentialism—do you see the world as half-full or half-empty? Audiences will decide what they want to take home from this play; I know some people who've seen the show [in Calgary] felt very hopeful for the characters, but others felt completely the opposite."

AND SOME Calgary theatregoers left simply wondering what had come over Eugene Stickland to make him write a downer like *All Clear*, with its grim echoes of Samuel Beckett's *Endgame*, instead of another *A Guide to Mourning* or *Midlife* or any of the other populist comedies he'd created during his 10-year stint as playwright-in-residence for Alberta Theatre Projects. Comedy does tend to be Stickland's natural habitat, but given the huge upheavals in the world (the 9-11 terrorist attacks) and in his home (the breakup of his marriage), he found his writing taking a noticeably darker turn.

"You're damned if you do and damned if you don't," says Wright, who also appeared in the Calgary production as distracted patriarch Delaney Ford, "and I think Eugene got slammed for it. The reactions were such polar opposites—people either loved it or they went, 'This is not Eugene.'"

Edmontonians might be more receptive to *All Clear*, though—especially if they saw Theatre Network's month premiere production last season of Stickland's offbeat archaeological comedy *Excavations*, whose thematic preoccupation with the long-ago extinction of the dinosaurs and the inevitable future extinction of the human race makes it *All Clear*'s spiritual cousin. (Wright appeared in that play too, playing a misanthropic old coot who takes an almost Biblical glee in the thought of humanity getting wiped out.)

Moss, who's directed four Stickland plays in five years for Theatre Network, sees other threads connecting *All Clear* to Stickland's previous work as well. "There's a surrealness to this play that you can see in previous shows of his, like *Appetite* or *Quartet*," he says. "And the style of humour is similar as well. Marianne Copithorne [Wright's real-life wife, who plays Delaney's discontented spouse Maddie] put it really well. She came in the other day and was talking about the duality in Eugene's writing—it's the end of the world, but every once in a while there's a little break where it goes into this absurd bit of comedy. I find that to be very human. You know, actors are trained to look for 'character arcs' and writers are always worrying about building the character to a big

climax, but to me the world is more Brechtian. You say one thing and then a few moments later you say something that totally contradicts yourself. I think in theatre we often spend too much time trying to map all that stuff out, but Eugene has a bit of a ragged edge to him. He's not afraid to have a character say something and then say the opposite two scenes later."

HOPEFULLY, Stickland shares this trait with his characters—he's informally announced that *All Clear* will be his final play. (He's currently working on his first novel and will continue to write his opinion column for the *Calgary Herald*.) If Stickland really is moving onto a new phase in

his career, it's ironic that he should leave behind a houseful of characters for whom moving on is impossible. Delaney wants to become a poet, but even though he's picked out a title for his first book—*A Study in Concrete*—that's about as much progress as he's been able to make. Meanwhile, his teenaged daughter Billie (Vanessa Holmes) is pining away for her first serious boyfriend, and his wife Maddie wants to leave him for another man—except, of course, she can't even leave the house. "They all have their own ways of coping with the stress of what's happened," Wright says. "Delaney just figures, 'Gotta keep busy, gotta keep busy.' It's his way of not dealing with the reality of the situation—but you've got to ask, who would want to? Maddie, meanwhile, is the one who still has hope, but ironically her hope is being able to leave her husband."

"That's where the real pathos in the play comes from," Moss says. "Not from the end-of-the-world situation, but from people's inability to say what they really need to say to each other."

"There's a moment between Delaney and Billie," Wright says, "where they admit to each other that they're scared to death, but he hasn't got the physical capability to just give her a hug. He tries, but he can't anymore. It's heart-breaking, but it's all more unsaid than said. That strikes me as a truism that runs through all of Eugene's writing—the silence, the look that sits there, the things that are not said."

WHEN I ASK Wright what he hopes audiences get out of his character, he says, "I just want people to say to themselves, 'God, I hope I don't end up like him.'" The same could be said of pretty much everyone else in the play as well—especially the brain-addled Bobby, which Wright and Moss agree is probably the most challenging role in the play. (Here's a sample line of Bobby's dialogue: "Orange orange orange orange orange orange red. Orange orange orange orange orange orange red.") If *All Clear* as a whole is reminiscent of *Endgame*, then Bobby's garbled soliloquies recall Lucky from Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*.

"It's a highly personal part," Moss says. "The thing everyone's been trying to help Jesse with is to help him have clarity about what he's trying to communicate. If he's clear about that, then I think we in the audience get it. And Jesse is one of those actors who's physical, who's got great instincts, who comes in and is willing to try a million things—he's found some things I doubt anyone else would ever find. And you really get behind his character's struggle—the thing I relate it to is my grandfather after he had his stroke and his inability to express the things he wanted to express. But if you could get his 'heart language,' you could still hook into what he was trying to say. It's a frustrated character and a frustrating part."

Despite the play's somewhat stylized post-apocalyptic setting, Bobby's peculiar brain injury is just about the only thing in *All Clear* that seems like science fiction. It was a little horrifying to realize, as Wright, Moss and I started bating around various doomsday scenarios, just how easy it was to imagine the world ending and how plausible and immediate all those scenarios seemed to be. "I know," Moss says. "It's not a *Twilight Zone* episode or *War of the Worlds* anymore. That's been the real wake-up call for me. And I think that if you go through the experience [of this play], you could even be motivated to live your life with a little more joy, a little more celebratory *joie de vivre*. If the end really is nigh, maybe we should stop bitching about the little things and make the decision to live life as fully as we can."

"Yeah," growls Wright. "That'll be the fucking day." ●

ALL CLEAR

Directed by Bradley Moss • Written by Eugene Stickland • Starring John Wright, Marianne Copithorne and Jesse Gervais • Roxy Theatre (10708-124 St) • Apr 6-18 • 453-2440

Apocalypse now

The world ends in a haze of orange fog in Eugene Stickland's *All Clear*

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

"I think T.S. Eliot was right," says director Bradley Moss. "It's not going to be a bang; it's going to be a whimper. You read the articles, and in the next 20 years we're going to lose thousands of species on this planet, the bird population has already dropped by 50 per cent.... I think that's the road we're on: we're going to dwindle away. You look at Easter Island, and that's the symbol of what's going to become of us."

"And yet I think there's going to be a lot of terrorist activity in the meantime," adds actor John Wright. "Especially headed toward the United States."

"And there'll be retaliations on account of

that," agrees Moss. "The U.S. has created a thousand Osamas. A hundred thousand. A whole generation looking for ways to avenge themselves against North America."

Moss, Wright and I are sitting in the Sugarbowl Café on 124 St, sipping coffees and squinting into the sunlight streaming through the front window. It's a beautiful, uncharacteristically warm spring day—so why are we discussing the end of the world? Well, it's because Moss and Wright are both involved in Theatre Network's production of Eugene Stickland's latest play, *All Clear*, a bleakly funny script about the dysfunctional Ford family's hapless attempts to cope with the fact that the world outside their door (and their duct-taped windows) has been destroyed. Stickland never explains the exact nature of the catastrophe—there might have been a nuclear war or maybe kind of environmental Armageddon has taken place. All we know is that all the electricity has been knocked out, the sounds of heli-

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Issue Number 442

April 8-14, 2004
available at over 1,400 locations

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The Edmonton Sun

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Beatnik turns ringmaster

Oral poetry guru
Mark Kozub
launches Tuesday
night "Word Circus"

By MALCOLM AZANIA
(MINISTER FAUST)

Mark "Alberta Beatnik" Kozub's seen the scene. He's been the scene. He's the word wizard who's toiled in the darkness for years, convening Tuesday night conjurings of velvet verse in a cave of lyric wonders called the Backroom Vodka Bar. Kozub, the man with the retro goatee and the hipster shirt, is a pioneer of our city's performance poetry scene. Former president of the mild, sweater vest of poetry called the Stroll of Poets Society, Kozub's now the don of the Raving Poets (www.ravingpoets.com), an edgier gang who for four years have been stoking the Backroom furnace with music and voice, and turning out an alloy of delight.

To celebrate National Poetry Month in April, the Raving Poets are presenting **Mumbo Jumbo: A Word Circus** every Tuesday at the Backroom. In fact this last Tuesday, city councillor Michael Phair was scheduled to perform the first poem at the Mumbo Jumbo kickoff. You'll find everyone of every type and

stripe here—not just during April, but at all Kozub's gigs, especially young people, with the genders "representing" at about even numbers. But there are some differences, he says, in how men and women step up to the microphone... and what happens after they do.

"There are big time differences," he says. "Sheri-D Wilson, based out of Calgary—she's got an album out called *Sweet Taste of Lightning*, a really cool CD. When you see her perform, she puts her entire body into it. And her stuff is very... kind of urban and sort of Beat Generation...

PROFILE POETRY

vaguely feminist and empowering to the female spirit with a sexual liberation component to it. She's one of the ones who's really, really amazing, particularly at a local level.... The difference, though, between men and women that I've noticed... and over the last year we've had a lot more female readers, there's some nights where I just can't believe just how deep some of the things are that are being shared. And it's been a fascinating look into the female psyche, some of it definitely being about jilted relationships... very dark, depressing thoughts about men, to angry thoughts about men."

Kozub searches carefully for his

next words. "And often when I hear that, I reverse the gender and I think, 'Wow, if a man got up and said that, every female poet in the crowd would form a small lynch mob to get this guy.'" He laughs.

"And we've actually had moments like that—not lynch mob moments, but certainly where you really notice there's been a real sharing of men getting up there and discussing how hurt they are, and women doing the same. I'd like to believe that when people do that, especially if there's an eloquence to it and a rawness and a realness, that both sexes walk away from the night that the sometimes Grand Canyon gap between the sexes suddenly doesn't seem as big any more. And [women] say, 'Wow, I think I understand guys,' and guys say, 'I think I understand women.' Poetry is a really intimate way of getting to those essential truths."

KOZUB RELEASES CDS of his poetry, printing a few dozen at a time and selling them at gigs. He's cur-



rently assembling a "best of" CD from a solo series he did during March. He's calling it *I Love Alberta Beat*. His own style is a strong concoction of standup, jazz alto-saxman, satirist and eulogist. "Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, Jello Biafra, Henry Rollins," says Kozub, "are definitely North American [poetic] voices, without a doubt, that speak with the social consciousness of North Americans. I love them and people like William S. Burroughs, and yet I'm not similar to Burroughs in that I'm not a guy in New York shooting up junk. And yet I find stuff like that entertaining."

Some of his relatives don't grok his fascination and work: "These poetry things—do you make money out of it? Why do you do these things?" A documentary on his work has aired on Bravo! and Book TV, causing relatives to call him, saying, "Hey, I just saw you on TV! Wow! It looks like things are going well for you!... What, the work is more valid because it's been seen by people? And beyond that, I don't see [my TV appearances] adding up to intense sales." ☺

Print Culture

Continued from page 6

collections of poetry and two of essays, the inventive 1997 short story collection *Gravity Gets You Down* and another novel, *Where She Was Standing* (2001). Not entirely happy with some of her early poetry, her recent move into fiction feels like starting a new career. "I worry, though, that people will be put off by the perception that I am a political activist," she says, "and that my books will therefore be some kind of manifesto, which they aren't. In North America we are much less aware of actions having a political context. In most parts of the world, people naturally see their lives as having a political context among other contexts, and one finds there's much less resistance to using political material in fiction." ☺

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HEALTH

Healthy, wealthy and cheap

EDMONTON—Showing that a mutual hatred of Ottawa can bring the most unlikely groups together, Alberta politicians and self-proclaimed experts on all sides of the healthcare debate came together to deride a proposal for a new federal tax that would provide the provinces with more money for medicare. For those who have been living in a cave on the moon for the past five years, healthcare funding (or lack thereof) has been a critical issue in Canada, and the feds and provinces hope to reach a financial agreement this summer that will put the Canadian institution on more stable ground. But the latest proposal—which was really more of an off-the-cuff suggestion thrown out there by an unnamed federal government source in an interview with the *Toronto Star* Monday—was discarded as “narrow-minded” and “abhorrent” by pundits of all political colours.

“In Alberta, we would get stung twice,” said New Democrat leader Raj Pannu in an interview with the *Edmonton Sun*, pointing out that the province already charges families \$1.056 a year in healthcare premiums. “The federal government has been running huge budget surpluses, and if they need additional revenues, maybe they can ask the corporations to pay a little more.”

Meanwhile, on the other side of the political spectrum, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation also had a few things to say about the idea. “What we should do instead is follow the example of Singapore, Australia, the Netherlands, Germany and other European countries and establish a parallel private system that coexists alongside the public system,” said CTF Alberta executive director John Carpay. “That would give Canadians the choice, if they want to, of spending more of their own money to get better healthcare and more healthcare.”

Alberta Liberal leader Kevin Taft, however, felt that the majority of Canadians would and should be willing to pay more income tax directed at healthcare. “But the concern there that we all have,” he added, “is they have to be legitimate expenses and the money well spent.”

Legitimate concerns all, but they beg the question: where did we think the money was going to come from? —CHRIS BOUTET

ENVIRONMENT

Kyoto finish?

BRUSSELS—If the Kyoto Accord was wheezing last week, the events of the past few weeks mean the death watch on the global greenhouse-gas reduction treaty has officially begun.

Germany, one of the nations which had long been one of the staunchest supporters of Kyoto, is now backing away from the document. At an EU

summit held in late March, Chancellor Gerhard Schröder asked for the implementation schedule of the Accord to be slowed down, a move which was rejected by a French-led majority of EU nations. But the Germans did force the EU to agree to launch a new study on the economic impact of the Accord.

The EU timeline for the implementation of Kyoto, which has yet to become international law, required each and every one of its member nations to submit their detailed plan to reduce greenhouse gases by the end of March. Only five nations met the deadline, among them, surprisingly, the cold-footed Germans. Ireland, Denmark, Finland and Austria were the only four other on-time nations. The fact that two-thirds of the EU were tardy on their plans is more proof of the waning support for the deal in a region which once supported Kyoto more strongly than any other.

The Accord has been in serious jeopardy since last year, when Russian President Vladimir Putin backed off of his nation's promise to ratify the Accord. If Russia and the United States do not sign the Accord (America backed out long ago), it cannot be ratified. —STEVEN SANDOR

SPACE

Kindersley wants to be Canada's Cape Canaveral

SASKATOON—It's not often that Saskatchewan gets to represent Canada in any form other than top-notch wheat production, but if all goes well, the small town of Kindersley could be the launching pad of Canada's entry into the space race.

According to a report in the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*, a volunteer-driven effort called the da Vinci Project will attempt this summer to be the first group in the world to launch an independent manned capsule into outer space from a site in Kindersley, a town of 5,500 just southwest of Saskatoon. The capsule, named Wildfire, will be launched into the

stratosphere from the town's airport.

The project is one of 24 in the world aiming to claim the X Prize, a \$10 million (U.S.) pot being offered by a private American firm to the first group to launch a manned reusable capsule 100 kilometres into space twice in two weeks. The capsule is to be carried by the world's largest helium balloon to a height of 24 kilometres, where its booster rockets will then fire, hopefully shooting the capsule to a height of about 120 kilometres above Earth. If everything goes as planned, astronaut Brain Feeney is expected to be in space for roughly five minutes before he and his craft drift back to terra firma by parachute.

So far, the da Vinci Project is considered to be one of the two front-runners in the competition, going head to head with the Rutan Project out of California. Rutan has the edge financially, with a \$25 million budget being floated by Microsoft chairman Bill Gates against da Vinci's far more humble \$5 million.

The da Vinci launch is being pushed heavily by Saskatchewan public relations firms, who expect the launch to be watched via satellite by billions worldwide. Still, project heads are surprised they haven't gotten more attention in Canada thus far. “It's very confusing because this is the dawn of a new era in travel, from right here in Kindersley,” said project spokesperson Melanie Wildman to the *Star Phoenix*. “We should be all over this in Saskatchewan but instead, no one seems to know or care.” —CHRIS BOUTET

MONEY

You give us too much credit

OTTAWA—Despite signs of a global economic recovery, the news continues to be bad for those in the credit card lending business.

To begin, MBNA Canada Bank—which offers MasterCard in Canada—launched an appeal against the \$50,000 fine levied against it by the Financial Consumer Association of

Canada. MBNA was fined for distributing application forms for fixed-rate credit cards which advertised its rates with the caveat “as low as” in the text. According to Canadian government rules, institutions that offers fixed-rate credit cards must specify that rate in the application forms they provide, without any muddly language. “The Commissioner determined that credit card application forms indicating a ‘rate as low as’ was in violation of the regulations in that it failed to disclose an annual interest rate,” stated the ruling.

In the United States, the American Bankers Association has just released its figures on credit-card debt for the last quarter of 2003. It found that the number of Americans who were more than 30 days late on their minimum payments had hit 4.43 per cent, an all-time high.

James Chessen, the ABA's chief economist, points to a jobless recovery as the cause of these defaulted payments. Even though markets around the world are recovering, the pace of job creation is still lagging behind, so those who lose their jobs are using their credit cards to pay for necessities like rent and groceries, gambling that they will have work by the time the bills come in. “Clearly the improving economy has not yet touched all individuals,” Chessen told Associated Press, “particularly those who continue to look for work and may be relying on credit cards to meet their daily living expenses. The financial strain is increasing as the time between jobs continues to lengthen.”

The news is just as bad outside of North America. LG Card, the largest credit card company in South Korea, was forced to suspend its shares last month after the company posted 2003 losses of nearly \$5 billion (U.S.). The company pinned most of the blame on its losses on defaulted payments, which also wiped out the firm's capital.

It all seems to indicate an increasing desperation on the part of the credit-card business—and that's a sign that the current economic good times may be only a market phenomenon. —STEVEN SANDOR



By T.J. MAIR

The phrase that preys

Britain's Plain English Campaign recently issued a list of overused words and phrases. List toppers: “at the end of the day,” “24/7,” “at this moment in time,” “thinking outside the box,” “it's not rocket science,” “shock and awe,” “embedded journalist” and “captured alive.”

I agree with these choices, but I hear others nearly every day lately that weren't included. Two in particular: “gay” and “retarded.” Gay, when used to mean happy or homosexual, is a fine word. In fact, I think that the gay-rights movement probably chose the word because of its positive connotations. Retarded, on the other hand, is always bigoted. Not having heard these words for some time, I had become hopeful that these distasteful terms were, if not totally gone, at least on their way to being expunged from our vernacular. Instead, they seem to be making a comeback.

I was in the video store the other day, where I overheard two students from the Education department discussing the new entry requirements. “I so lucked out to get in when I did, ‘cause they expect you to get, like, 70 per cent now,” one said.

“Oh, I know! That's just so retarded,” was the reply.

It's disturbing—these are teachers of unsuspecting future generations, upon whom they will perpetuate their attitudes. With the behaviour displayed in a school in Calgary recently, where a deaf child with Down syndrome was restrained by being subjected to solitary confinement in a box, these university students can look forward to gainful employment with like-minded colleagues.

Another time, I was at my friend's house when her cousin came over, complaining about something that pissed her off: “It's just so gay!” As she noticed my friend (who happens to be a lesbian) wince, she explained, “Oh, I don't mean gay like you. I mean gay like stupid.”

This “new” counter-movement of rejecting political correctness seems to be couched in insularity. Political correctness, while it might have been well-intended originally, has actually become a restraining mask of hatred rather than an emancipator. What bothers me is its replacement with a celebration of close-mindedness spun as cutting-edge free speech for the members of a social group who believe themselves to be the victims of a silencing conspiracy.

At the end of the day, if we want society captured alive, let's think outside the box (instead of putting kids in them) 24/7, and reject the embedded ignorance that has returned with shock and awe at this point in time. It's not rocket science. ☺

Too Polite



Haiku Horoscope

ARIES

(Mar 21-Apr 19)
So-called "energy"
Drinks don't allow you to shoot
Lasers from your eyes

LIBRA

(Sept 23-Oct 22)
That voice in your head
That tells you to kill will help
You write rap lyrics

TAURUS

(Apr 20-May 20)
Spring is in the air
And so is love, way up there
Just out of your reach

SCORPIO

(Oct 23-Nov 21)
Get a new haircut
That Seville guy is slashing
His prices this week

GEMINI

(May 21-June 20)
You've graduated
And become an astronaut
Sit back and get high

SAGITTARIUS

(Nov 22-Dec 21)
Juggling those wombats
Is a great way to impress
Psychotic women

CANCER

(June 21-July 22)
Nothing is quite as
Romantic as proposing
Astride a jet ski

CAPRICORN

(Dec 22-Jan 19)
Acupuncture is
A possible solution
To your cash problem

LEO

(July 23-Aug 22)
One day that beaten
Path is just not going to
Take it anymore

AQUARIUS

(Jan 20-Feb 18)
Life would be a lot
Easier if you would stop
Taunting wolverines

VIRGO

(Aug 23-Sept 22)
They say that you can't
Take it with you but you will
Prove them wrong again

PISCES

(Feb 19-Mar 20)
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Looks like a mushroom

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ELIZABETH HUDSON



reads from her new book

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a memoir of her life of drugs and
prostitution in Calgary and
Vancouver.

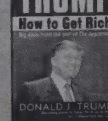
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BY STEWART BELL

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Canada's failure to deal seriously
with terrorists on our soil"

Martin Collcott, Canada's former
ambassador to Syria & Lebanon



three dollar bill

By RICHARD BURNETT

Get up, stand-up

If I were a dyke, I'd go down on Canadian comic Maggie Cassella. She's funny, sexy and I love her trailblazing all-gay comedy festival, We're Funny That Way. So, to celebrate WFTW's seventh edition, I tracked down some of the guests starring in the fest's star-studded April 14 gala, including stand-up comic Bob Smith, TV star Gavin Crawford and Canadian rocker Alannah Myles.

Dykes across the Great White North are now asking, "Hold on—you're not talking about the leather-clad Alannah Myles who won a Best Female Rock Performance Grammy Award for 'Black Velvet' back in 1990, are you?" You bet I am.

"I'd be a liar if I said there wasn't a time in my life where I wasn't attracted to a woman for qualities she may have possessed," Myles told me this week. "But I am a completely grounded heterosexual and will likely remain so for the rest of this lifetime. [Some friends] have difficulty understanding how I can love a gay woman and not have her for breakfast. Could be why I tend to be on the lean side."

Myles still looks great and so does bestselling author Bob Smith who, quite frankly, is sick and tired of being introduced as "the first openly gay comic to guest on *The Tonight Show*."

And with Keanu Reeves. But I digress. Smith tells many Hollywood tales but will only publicly trash one star, Sharon Stone, who didn't like the script Smith wrote for her at the MTV Awards where he was one of the show's three writers. "I was not allowed to speak with Sharon Stone even though she was standing two feet away from me," Smith says. "I had to speak to her assistant. Then she didn't do the joke onstage. She ad-libbed her own joke and it bombed. That's why these award shows are awful—[stars] pick the worst jokes or ad-lib. Sharon Stone—I am not a fan."

But Smith adores comedy legend Joan Rivers, who welcomed him on her television talk show when he was breaking into showbiz. "But I still had a catering job," he says, "and one day we catered a party at her house. I wore my glasses so no one would recognize me and when I walked out with a tray of hors d'oeuvres, guests asked me, 'Weren't you on Joan's show?' So Joan comes right over to me, grabs my arm and announces, 'This man was on my show!' She looks at me and says, 'Isn't this the most embarrassing moment of your life?' Then she told me the same thing happened to her when she met Jack Lemmon. She'd been waiting on him when she started out."

Another WFTW guest is Alberta native Gavin Crawford, who told me last year, "It's weird being out in Hollywood because [everyone's sexuality] is common knowledge. There still aren't that many out comedians and gay characters on TV. So it was more important for me to come out because when I was young there was no one

out except for the freaks on Oprah."

Crawford's big break came playing WFTW back in 1997. Festival founder Maggie Cassella, whose talk show *Because I Said So* is still going gangbusters on Star TV, recalls, "He showed up and I wondered should I tell him he sucks or put him on the show and have him catapult over me. He stole the show. I'm always looking for the next Gavin. I'm always into helping other comics."

Myles also knows a thing or two about adversity since her music career peaked with "Black Velvet." "I remember Cher telling me how frustrated she felt after her name was [mud] in Hollywood after doing those infomercials," Myles says. "What I learned from the greatest female diva alive is, if you desire to be great you must expect great hardships, setbacks and envy as large as the love you will receive."

As for American Bob Smith, he's just happy to be back in Canada. "I prefer gay marriage in Canada because the gay exchange rate is so much better up here," he cracks. "You can come up with one American guy and go home with two Canadian husbands!"

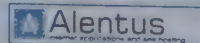
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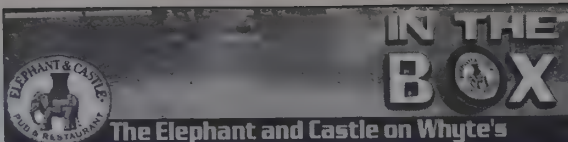
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The Elephant and Castle on Whyte's

BY DAVID YOUNG
AND JOHN TURNER

Last week for the Oilers was, well, the last week for the Oilers. Nashville is in the playoffs and the Oilers aren't. In fact, the Oilers are the only Canadian team not in the playoffs this year. Which means that for this year, *In the Box* is in the Can. Hopefully Dave and John will start again next September, should the upcoming impasse between the NHLPA and the league be solved.

John: The playoff matchups have been set and Edmonton isn't a part of them this year, which is really too bad because it may be awhile before we see any playoffs again. It's been a season of ups and downs in which my expectations from the team changed dramatically. When the Oil got off to a decent start in October, I wrote about how they had surpassed my expectations because I didn't think they would play that well. And then when they started to tank after the Heritage Classic I couldn't believe how badly they were playing. Then when the Oilers pulled out that amazing run of points over the last five weeks of the season it made me believe that with their present personnel and the experience they've gained this year, the Oil will be a great team

next year.

Dave: And next year might not happen. If it does, GM Kevin Lowe looks like he has the makings of a great squad. Tommy Salo has been replaced with Jussi Markkanen and Ty Conklin—two competent young goalkeepers who could cost less combined than Salo all by himself. Petr Nedved energized the team, but who knows if he'll stay? Raffi Torres has endeared himself to Oiler fans and Marc-Andre Bergeron looks like he could be a regular in the Oilers' defense corps.

John: Edmonton kept its slim playoff hopes alive last week by beating Dallas in the Lone Star State—something they haven't accomplished in eight years. When Dallas took a 1-0 lead, I have to admit that I thought the Oil were dead. But their determination prevailed and goals by Radek Dvorak, Ryan Smyth and Bergeron gave Oiler fans something to hope for heading into the final weekend. And then when St. Louis beat Nashville Saturday afternoon, I thought the stage was set for a miracle.

Dave: The Oilers have teased us from February right up until the second-last evening of regular season hockey. It looked like the team would squeak into the playoffs after all, but Oiler fans got no satisfaction whatsoever. Instead, Edmonton hockey fans

were left with the sports equivalent of blue balls. Saturday night was a lonely night.

John: Edmonton came out flying Saturday night against Vancouver and looked much more relaxed than they did last week when they lost in St. Louis 1-0. Had they capitalized on more of their chances in the first half of the game there may have a different ending than the 5-2 loss they suffered. Both teams looked pretty even and it was the type of game that should have been determined by one goal scored late in the third period. What the Oilers did accomplish the last few weeks of the season with their awesome level of play is that I am now going to miss seeing them play if there is indeed a strike next season.

Dave: The team was ready for playoffs after fighting to within two points of the show. And a Detroit/Edmonton matchup would have been a doozy. The Oilers and Wings both play exciting hockey. A first-round battle between the two clubs would have been one of the highlights of a first round chock-full of great matchups. I noticed two very strange things during the Vancouver/Edmonton game. After the game, CBC showed clips of the Canucks' fan appreciation celebration at GM Place. Todd Bertuzzi made a special appearance on the ice surface where a group of lucky fans awaited game jerseys from Canuck players. After stepping onto the ice, the first fan Bertuzzi passed was a gentleman with a neck brace on. Spooky. The other strange thing? The game may have been the first in the NHL with two sets of twins on the ice. The first set of twins, obviously, were the Sedins, Henrik and Daniel. The second set of twins were Oiler Petr Nedved (a Czech centre who once played for the Canucks as well as the Canadian National team) and Canuck Trevor Linden (a Canadian who occasionally centres the checking line and has been a Canadian and a Canuck twice). Have you seen Linden and Nedved? They look almost as similar as the Sedins do. Really spooky. ☹

on Whyte!

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Café ORLEANS

12208 Jasper Ave • 452-3160

The menu at Café Orleans has a wide variety of standard N'awlins-style food, which always turns my culinary crank. Kate starts with a spicy chicken salad, while I can't take my eyes off the chicken and sausage gumbo. A cup is \$4.95 but the bowl costs just a buck more, and I've always been a sucker for the upsell. I'm soon having second thoughts about my decision, but not because the gumbo isn't satisfactory—on the contrary, the thick, hearty, ultra-spicy mix is a real attention-getter, leaving my nose a little runny and my nasal passages incredibly clear—but strictly because of its size. I take a few big swigs of my Buffalo draft to combat the lingering burn. The spicy chicken salad is generally a hit too, the crunchy candied pecans offering a textural balance with the tender, fiery chicken. One small beef about the salad: the orange vinaigrette is on the watery side and pools up on the bottom of the plate. Somewhere in the middle of the evening, it feels as though the ceiling is caving in. We speculate wildly as to what's going on until I remember that Arthur Murray's is directly overhead and Fridays are apparently a big night in Edmonton's dance class scene. The pounding subsides quickly and before I know it, our blackened lamb rack and rice and beans are at the table. The lamb, served with a cinnamon-flavoured sauce, is awesome—tender and perfectly medium rare with that strong, distinctive taste. As for the rice and beans... well, it's not the vegetarian dish I had imagined, what with the pieces of smoky-tasting sausage accompanying it. Not that I have a problem with that. We've already decided that the bread pudding is a must. It's a relatively light and delicious version of the renowned sweet, unlike the horrible clump of dense bread I sampled a few years back at one of the more popular downtown steakhouses. **Average Price: \$\$\$-\$\$\$** (Reviewed 02/16/04)

CULINA

9914-89 Ave • 437-5588

A detailed explanation of renowned local chef Brad Lazarenko's new place comes in the mission statement printed right on the clipboard-style menu: "Your friendly neighbourhood restaurant serving ethnic comfort food, eclectic wines and crafty spirits." It's a more than apt description, and I can't help but think it'll be a hit based on atmosphere alone; the black and brown walls, oil paintings and metal ceiling fans create an environment that's at once classy and casual, a mood enhanced even more by the vintage big-band tunes emanating from the CD player. The menu's set up beautifully, with a small variety of categories

like day dishes (cuLoina is open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and then reopens in the early evening), confection, caffeine, brews, wines and dinner dishes, the latter broken up into "small" and "large." The organic chorizo sausage, chickpea and tomato hotpot with grilled cornbread is a mouthwatering example of the ultra-affordable smaller dishes, while the larger Alberta beef flank steak with blue cheese and chocolate (for just \$15) looks like a winner from the list of bigger items. Oh yes, Sunday is family night and for \$20 per person, the cuisine is served platter-style. I go with a light special for that day: the halibut and avocado taco. It comes with a side of "green salad," which at cuLoina means a mix of romaine, spinach, Edam cheese, fruit and vegetables with an orange ginger dressing. The taco is amazing. Large, browned chunks of halibut are inserted into the homemade soft shell along with strands of a yellowish cabbage and the avocado, with a bit of guacamole on the side. It's rich in texture but hardly heavy. And it goes real well with my Belgian Hoegaarden beer. The salad features grapes, pear chunks and corn and I get a subtle hint of the ginger in the dressing which each clean mouthful. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 04/01/04)

DARIEN'S COCKTAILS AND FINE FOODS

5552 Calgary Trail South (Plaza 55) • 439-8675

Darien puts a lot of serious effort into his wings. He tells me his exclusive mix of spices for the various flavours on the menu is completely secret—he doesn't even tell the kitchen staff what they consist of. The variations are numerous: BBQ, honey garlic, teriyaki, salt and pepper, lemon and pepper, Cajun. Then you get into the heat: there's mild, medium and hot, and then you cross over into an entirely different realm with Chernobyl, Meltdowns and the mack daddy of 'em all, the Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns, which are served with—no word of a lie—plastic gloves and a waiv-

er. Our group discusses wing protocol and decide that the six of us will go with some of the tamer varieties before we jump into a couple dozen Chernobyls and then a dozen Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns. We safely dance through the preliminary round but fear grips the table in anticipation of the killer wings to come. We all sign the waiver, whereupon Darien brings the wings over personally. (He's the only one who makes the Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns, by the way.) I can't say I've ever smelled such a scent—it's reminiscent of death. We suit up with the gloves and John goes for it. Steve does the same soon after, and following a helluva lot of deliberation, I munch on a drummie. How to describe the taste? Well, John, immediately begins to sweat. Steve is making alarming sounds I've never heard him make and I'm genuinely scared for him. As for me, the burn is beyond anything I've ever experienced before. Tears flow from my eyes and saliva builds up in my mouth at a sickeningly quick pace. Thankfully, we had milk with us, which was one of Darien's tips. Water and beer only add to the pain, he told us—a little-known fact that you'd do well to keep in mind if you're masochistic enough to try a Thermo-Nuclear Meltdown yourself. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 03/04/04)

FLAVOURS MODERN BISTRO

10354-82 Ave • 439-9604

You want brave? Try opening a restaurant a few weeks before Christmas, which is exactly what the owners of Flavours Modern Bistro have done on the famous Old Strathcona stretch. Sure, you get the Christmas push, but January is downtime for most establishments. Then again, there's a reason rents on Whyte are so high: never-ending traffic. I walked into Flavours (kudos to them on the inclusion of the "u," by the way), the former location of the Bagel Tree, and was immediately impressed by the look of the swanky new spot, what with the cozy blue chairs, dark hardwood décor (both tables and floor) and the high ceiling

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DISH WEEKLY

complete with oddly-shaped alcoves on the walls. I have an intelligent, concise menu in front of me, offering a selection of salads, apps, "flavourwiches" and a few tasty-looking entrées (oh, and two varieties of eggs Benedict). I almost bite on the braised lamb shanks with a white bean and lentil ragout but I always get lamb, so I go instead for the chicken pancetta sandwich (sorry, flavourwich), featuring a grilled chicken breast, pancetta, smoked mozzarella with a roasted red pepper and garlic mayo on multi-grain bread. Basically, it's a high-end "club." In a fowl mood himself, Steve selects the five-pecan crusted chicken, a real earthy-looking dish that was served with a brown pommery mustard sauce. More people begin to file in and I decide that Flavours is a solid addition to Whyte's dining scene and not just because people are trudging along in minus-40 weather to get there. I can't think of many, if any, places on the strip that combine such an obvious level of sophistication with so little in the

way of pretension and overly expensive items. The well-proportioned dishes top out at about \$16 or \$17 while the top price on the wine list is about \$40 or so, instead of a starting point. You could easily spend more for less. **Average Price: \$5** (Reviewed 01/29/04)

IL PORTICO

10012-107 St. • 424-0707

Six years in the River City and I'd never given this house of reputedly choice Italian cuisine a go. I can't get over the complexity of the menu, which deserves some in-depth description. From tantalizing apps like the beef carpaccio with fresh arugula and white truffle oil, right through to wildly creative entrées such as the pan-roasted, corn-fed, free-range chicken breast with lemon and rosemary, porcini mushroom risotto, parmesan fried zucchini and sundried tomato dressing, it all looks so inviting. Our attentive server, who has a fairly overt swagger and air of confidence that I figure pretty much comes with the territory, brings us two plates of olive oil and balsamic vinegar and some delicious crunchy bread to start. There's eight of

us at the table but he suggests we pace ourselves and begin with the appetizer platter for four. And what a fantastic spread it is. The fried calamari is accompanied by a piquant dip, while the rest of the plate features bruschetta, mixed olives and a bevy of grilled treats, including prawns, Italian sausage, vegetables (eggplant, portobello mushroom and yellow zucchini) and a magnificent grilled radicchio starter stuffed with mozzarella and prosciutto. I see a couple of the popular pastas further down the table, one with linguine and a copious amount of shrimp, and another penne version with tenderloin tips and mushrooms in a spicy tomato sauce. I, like a few others, decide on the mahi tuna special. The pepper-encrusted steak is seared to medium rare perfection and placed on a bed of mashed potatoes, green beans and finely shredded carrots, which resembles a little nest. A thin butter cream sauce encircles the entire set of items on my plate and makes for a lovely presentation. We only order two sweets in total, but both are showstoppers. At one end is the cappuccino crème brûlée with Frangelico whipped cream and a chocolate biscotti. I take a pass on anything featuring chocolate, but only because I have a hunch that the limoncello sorbetto, with a raspberry vanilla bean consommé and iced blueberries, will offer one helluva clean finish. **Average price: \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$** (Reviewed 02/26/04)

WHITE SPOT

3921 Calgary Trail • 432-9153

True, the White Spot is a chain but it's a western Canadian one, which isn't so bad. Founder Nat Bailey was a crafty Vancouver entrepreneur who got the business up and running way back in the '30s, a few years after opening the country's first drive-in restaurant following a car ownership boom in the Lower Mainland. Smart guy. It's since expanded throughout B.C. and into Alberta, with the Calgary Trail locale being the only one of its kind in Edmonton (and the farthest east of any White Spots). This particular branch understandably has a bit of a hockey motif going on, with Original 6 jerseys displayed alongside some old-school metal blade skates and various pictures adorning the walls. I figure they must have that new Joe station tuned in on the radio. Someone told me it's "a mix of all sorts of crap" and when the rotation goes from old Depeche Mode to Macy Gray and then to Phil Collins's "Easy Lover," I'm convinced. I go big, passing up on some of the staple breakfast items in favour of the renowned pancake sandwich, which the menu describes as a stack of buttermilk pancakes with an egg on top and a choice of bacon or sausage on the side. Whenever I indulge in some pancakes, I tend to wanna eat 'em up real fast. The reason being, pancakes get cold quickly. Not at White Spot, however. Your syrup comes to the table in a little personal dispenser—and get this: it's warmed up in the kitchen. That's such a simple touch but it honestly does cure the one and only problem I have with pancakes. It's like those glasses filled with fluid that you put upside-down in the freezer—the only problem with beer is that it gets warm, but in one of those glasses, it only gets colder as you drink it. These are ingenious ideas, people. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 02/12/04)

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Carnivore knowledge

Friday-night steak feast makes the Bruce Hotel a meat-lover's mecca

By DAVID DICENZO

Martin's brown country-style blazer and big rancher hat mean one of two things: either the Bruce locals will love him or, as some of us have surmised, they'll wanna kick the crap out of the big-city university pretty boy for his mocking ways.

If the latter happens, it won't be the first time.

"Have I ever told you about the last time I was in Tofield?" Martin says of his birthplace, just a hop, skip and jump from Bruce. "Within 30 seconds, someone called me faggot."

Luckily, we have numbers on our side this time in case something goes down. A large group of us have gathered for a road trip to the **Bruce Hotel**, located about 95 kilometres down Highway 14 (East). Martin had been talking the place up for more than a year now, regaling us with stories of the best steak he ever had. You see, Friday is steak night at the hotel and we carnivores are salivating at the prospect of this venture into the Alberta countryside.

"I want to be able to pick my own cow... like a lobster," Steve says ambitiously.

Most of the group piles into a rented van, while the lady and I follow along in our wheels. Other than the fact that they almost pluck a deer on the road, the drive goes well. I arrive in Bruce a couple minutes behind the rest, but I have no need of directions seeing as the hotel is the town's major building, kinda like a scaled-down version of the CN Tower in the Big Smoke or the Space Needle in Seattle. Terrific aromas waft through the air the moment we walk up to the place, and inside it's completely packed. The room is like a huge cottage, complete with props: cattle skull, rodeo pictures and horseshoes. And if that doesn't convince you that this place is authentic, the poster reminding folks to get their horses checked for West Nile will. I haven't seen too many of those on Whyte Ave.

We take up a full corner of the joint and the waitress proceeds to get us started. There's a definite system at work here. She asks us each our names and then orders our meals accordingly. When it's all done, you walk up to the counter and say something like, "Dave here... what do I owe?" The name part is also important because everyone gets called into the kitchen individually to get their steak.

I like that.

STEAKS ARE THE ONLY ITEM on the menu on Fridays—but why the hell would you want anything else? They start with baby-like four-ouncers and proceed from there. The largest is 16 ounces; it costs \$20.99

(GST included) and like the other sizes, it comes with an unlimited spread of salads, sides and desserts—dill and cream potatoes (wicked, by the way), franks and beans, corn, mushrooms and onions, at least seven salads, pickles, fresh fruit and an assortment of goodies for the sweet tooth from the lemony poppyseed cake with butter icing to the cappuccino Nanaimo bars and Hershey's kisses. And free coffee!

"Sixteen or go home," yells Steve.

At 35, I'm not susceptible to peer pressure, but I can feel the heat this time. Many of us go 16 but the news is bad: a huge group was in earlier

RESTAURANTS

and cleaned most of the massive cuts out. We "settle" for the next-biggest choice, the 12-ounce.

Our names begin to get called and though we don't chow down all at the same time, everybody looks pretty damn happy cutting into the beautiful slabs. Our visiting English buddy Chaz earns a few glares when he orders his steak "really, really well done." (Brits, eh? Not exactly the culinary geniuses of the world, and Chaz proves it by eating garlic bread with HP sauce and cookies as his appetizer.) I ask for mine medium rare and though it could be a touch redder, my knife glides through the sublime meat like it's cream cheese. Martin's lucky—it's indeed a fantastic steak.

It's a fun atmosphere too. The staff, who are quick to announce any and every type of celebration, interrupts us periodically. There's an anniversary and a birthday, which means we're all required to sing. "And sing it loud or I'll make you sing it again!" the waitress says at the top of her lungs.

Someone even tells a mad cow joke to the crowd, which I didn't actually hear. But I laugh just at the idea of it.

"Where the hell are we?" Tess asks following the BSE crack.

MY MOTOR SKILLS are diminishing with each bite of steak and the rest of the table is definitely slowing down as well as the plates empty. The staff is more than apologetic about the lack of sixteens. They're genuinely concerned if we've been satisfied. We appreciate it and insist that in retrospect, maybe the 12-ouncer was the better way to go anyway. I drag my stuffed carcass up to the counter and pay for "Kate and Dave 1." (As always, there was at least one other Dave around.)

Karl, who runs the place along with wife Deb—a wedding picture of the happy couple adorns a wall near our tables—tells me they've owned the place for about six years now. He originally hails from Cape Breton but the Easterner looks like he's right at home in Wild Rose Country. They have it more than good in Bruce. Karl invites us back for a special rib night coming up later on in April and I insist I'll be paying another visit. Really nice guy.

I know it's time to leave when a sauced-up cougar [Dave! Again with the cougar remarks? Didn't you read *Your Vue this week?* —Ed.] takes a stab at karaoke, singing "Stroke It." With the mic in her hand (and what seems like a significant amount of liquid courage) she says something along the lines of "It's not how deep the fish are, it's how you wiggle the worm."

Cheque, please?

Most of the gang goes into Tofield for additional beers. I pass, opting to get my sleepy girlfriend home. I do see Martin two days later, though. He made it outta there alive. But that's only because he left the hat in the van. ☺

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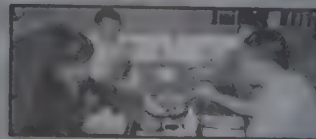
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Ski patrol's greatest hits

"It did solve the problem of transporting him with a 180-centimetre ski sticking through his thigh."

By STEWART DUNCAN



The second-last Canadian Ski Patrol System member to leave the hill heads down to the 33-year-old log lodge as another ski season wraps up at Harper Mountain near Kamloops, B.C. The 2003-2004 season, which started in late November and lasted until mid-March, saw some of the best conditions in more than a decade.

It was one of those brilliant winter mornings when fresh snow comforts the weary world and a forgiving sun bathes it with a sense of warm new beginnings. It was one of those mornings on B.C.'s Harper Mountain, though it could have been any mountain, when skiers run fresh out of adjectives and everything is reduced to appropriate clichés.

The brilliance of the sun sliced through the thickest blue a sky can hold, a blue so deep and rich that someone, somewhere, must be footing an enormous bill because such a canvas can't possibly be free. Thousands of snow crystals would ignite with sunlight for a split second like tiny flashbulbs, then disappear. Wherever the sun touched the fresh-powdered surface, it looked like diamond chips had been sown like wheat or applied like glitter gel on a party girl's skin. Far below, ice-free Paul Lake stretched out as still as a painting, reflecting the sky right down to the vapour trail of a jet

aiming for Edmonton.

Is it real? Or are the drugs so good?


One of the perks of being a ski patroller is that you get to be first down a fresh, corduroy carpet. Nothing looks better behind you than your own tracks defiling the groomer's painstaking work. But I chose the ungroomed Monashee, a black-diamond run characterized by bumps and thumping. Today it was covered in the stuff that skier's dreams are made of and, as I started down the first steep slope, I thought again how

great it is to pillage such a hill.

Ironically, this wasn't the way it worked out.

In fact, that irony was the last thought that flipped through my mind as both of my skis locked in a rut and stopped. The bindings released and I pitched forward so hard and fast I didn't even have time to put my hands out to absorb some of the impact. The thin layer of fresh snow had blown away from my landing


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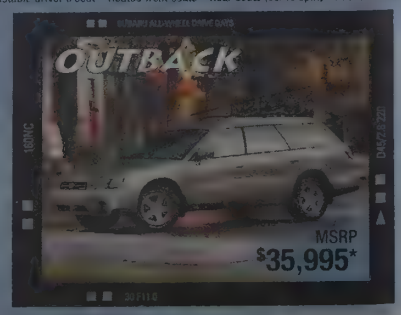
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Stop, shop and droll

Snow Zone's national team correspondent recalls an amusing season of adventures

By ALEXA LOO

Another Canadian National Championships over and another snowboard season wrapped up. It was a pretty exciting year for me, especially the two training camps on the Farnham Glacier with Canadian alpine and freestyle skiers. We were flown up to the glacier every day in a helicopter and shuttled to the top of the piste by Sno-Cats.

The Farnham Glacier is near Invermere in eastern B.C. On our day off in Invermere, I saw my first rodeo, which was held in the town ice arena. At the small-town event, it was possible to sit quite close to the action and have a good look at the bulls—and the crazy guys who were trying to ride them.

The World Cup in Chile saw us buying lapis lazuli (the pretty blue stone native to the region) at the tourist trap marketplace. We also climbed up the many stairs of the Santa Lucia monument, which gave us a rather murky view of the smoggy, six-million-strong city of Santiago.

In the fall, I trained with the team in Austria, where I visited a castle and bought some rather nifty party boots for \$50. The ski and snowboard World Cups overlapped a little in Soelden, Austria during the second week of October and I was able to practice my German with

some of the Austrian men's ski team.

From Austria, we hustled to Holland for the first-ever indoor snowboard World Cup. The event was hailed as a success because there was a sell-out crowd cheering and partying in the oversized refrigerator. The big fridge in Landgraaf, Holland boasts one of the few six-person chairlifts in the world, although why you need a six-pack chairlift and two Poma lifts in such a small space is beyond me.

Back in North America, we com-



peted in Copper, Colorado and then returned to Canada for some training in the Rockies. It was then up to Whistler for more World Cup action and lots of good sushi.

After finishing up in Whistler, it was off to the Grand Prix event in Park City, Utah and then further east to the World Cup in Stoneham, Quebec. As always, the event in Quebec was a lot of fun as all of the teams stayed in the same hotel in downtown Quebec City—right next door to a great nightclub.

Finally, I got a break from my crazy travel schedule to enjoy Christmas in Whistler with my family. Unfortunately, my aunt died on

Boxing Day and I had to take my family on a quick trip to San Diego to deal with the funeral arrangements. At least I was able to make a quick day trip into Tijuana and tell people that I went to Mexico.

AFTER CHRISTMAS, we went to Europe for a five-week-long marathon trip. We managed to squeeze in eight races and lots of training in five different countries. Maribor, Slovenia was the coolest stop on that trip. The mix of the old and the new was really intriguing, like the automated parking pillar that sinks into the old cobblestone paving to allow cars to pass over it.

We were also in time for the January sales while in Maribor and I managed to nab a full-length down coat for \$14. And they have this fantastic chocolate spread that's half white chocolate and half dark chocolate. The spread is kind of like Nutella, but without the nuts which the Nutella people include in order to fool consumers into thinking it's healthy. I credit the fresh white buns and the chocolate spread for my 17th-place finish—at that point my best result of the year.

Travel-weary, we returned to Whistler for a training camp while the rest of the World Cup tour went to

Japan. It was good to get home and tackle my own personal mountain... of laundry. Some of my Quebec teammates, Philippe Berube and Constance Boisvert, stayed with me in Whistler and tutored me in French during the camp. But I'm not really convinced that all of the phrases I learned are suitable for polite company.

Primed from the Whistler training, I went to Mount Bachelor and posted my best-ever World Cup result and

Alexa Loo is a member of Canada's national snowboard team.



also the best-ever Canadian women's result: fifth place in the Parallel GS!

Once again we packed up and flew to Europe for the World Cup finals in Bardonecchia, Italy, which will be the snowboard venue for the 2006 Olympic Winter Games. While there was no McDonald's (or, as we affectionately called it, "the Canadian embassy") in Bardonecchia, there was no risk that anyone would go hungry because the organizing committee provided us with copious amounts of top-notch food in true Italian style.

WHEN THE SNOWSTORM HIT and covered the ground with a nice layer

of yellowish/pink snow, I was astounded to learn that the colour was due to particles of sand from the Sahara that are picked up by the jetstream and then fall with the snow. The fine pink sand even found its way into the water pipes, which caused me quite a bit of alarm when I first turned on the tap to brush my teeth.

Our European trip was topped off with a visit to the Sacre San Michele, the abbey perched atop the mountain near Turin, and then a tour of Turin itself. Between seeing the historical sites and battling the crazy city traffic, I managed to do a little shopping and found a great little handbag for \$10. It felt wrong for me to visit Italy and come home without some little shopping mementos. Actually, it kind of breaks my heart to go anywhere remotely exotic without personally investigating the shopping situation.

My long season of snowboarding, sightseeing and shopping wrapped up in Mont Avila, Quebec in the rain and fog with a second-place finish in the PGS. I am now looking forward to emptying out all of my bags, putting my feet up for a few days and planning some more travels. And more snowboarding too. ●

Ski Patrol

Continued from previous page

spot and the side of my face hit the icy hard pack like an eastbound wasp on a westbound windshield. My goggles split in a symmetrical arc from the bottom right eye to the bottom left.

I got to see lots of stars, but none of them looked like J-Lo.

THE GOOD NEWS was that three of four first-aid treatments were automatically applied without my having to do a thing. Patrolers treat impact injuries according to the RICE acronym—i.e., Rest the injured body part, apply Ice to reduce swelling, use a tensor bandage for Compression to reduce swelling and pain and Elevate the injury to allow the blood to flow away more easily, again reducing swelling.

Well, I was already resting because movement hadn't yet occurred to me. Check.

Being face-down on the ice took care of the need to chill. Check.

Compression was easy because the impact had already flattened my head like Wile E. Coyote hitting the bottom of a high cliff. Check.

However my head was downhilled, so the Elevation aspect wasn't quite right. This was of no concern to me at the time, since I didn't know which way was up anyway.

As my starbursts diminished, my eyes opened and I realized it was daytime. This would have been a darn good time to have a helmet, I thought. I began a system check: can I wiggle my toes? No. Uh-oh. Well, I can't wiggle them in my boots anyway.

I decided to start at the other end. What's my name? Ralph Klein. Okay, good. Where am I from? Middle Earth, a couple doors down from Frodo. Okay, I seem quite coherent. Can I move my right arm? I brought my left hand up. Good. I seem to be just fine.

With my thumb and pinkie down, I asked myself how many fingers I was holding up? Six, I said without hesitation. Right. I'm obviously A-OK. No apparent brain injury....

Eventually, I pulled myself together and found my skis, poles, gloves, toque and underwear. I wasn't paralyzed at all. I didn't ski much for the rest of the day, preferring to idle away the hours trying to convince myself that it's good for a ski patroller to bite the ice now and then. It, um, keeps us humble. Yeah, that's it. Big help. Oh, well, at least I didn't suffer a grand mal seizure on the chairlift, slip unconscious under the safety bar and fall five metres to the ground, landing like a sack of wet sand.

THAT WAS ONE SCENARIO that patrolers at Sun Peaks Resort had to deal with this winter. The man who

slipped to earth landed in enough deep snow to cushion his fall. He was helped to some degree by his own unconsciousness because it's better to be fully relaxed and flexible on impact than all tightened up with terror. His brother helped too, holding onto him as long as he could. By the time his grip failed, the chair had moved to an area where the drop wasn't as far.

When the ski patrolers got to him, they took all the appropriate precautions, applying a neck brace and securing him firmly to a backboard. They took him carefully down to the first-aid room and, after a thorough examination by medical staff, the patient walked away, none the worse for all the excitement.

It wasn't the only unusual accident this year.

Another time, a young woman fell as she was getting off the chair and landed hard astride her snowboard on edge. She was in a lot of pain right where no one wants it, especially in a public place. This is an awkward situation to deal with, especially when the patrolers on scene all happen to be male. A discreet call was put in for a female patroller, mostly for patient comfort, but no one else was at the top of the hill.

The treatment for such an injury is the same anyway: focus on the primary injury, staying alert for secondary problems, including any medical con-

dition that may have caused the fall in the first place. Patrolers and friends of the patient formed a privacy wall while one person calmly shooed away onlookers. The patient was curled up and holding her hands over her injury. Patrolers gave her a large, sterile, absorbent pad and, with permission, unzipped her ski pants so she could apply pressure to her crotch from inside. They got her to remove the pad a moment later so they could assess bleeding.

She said she wasn't pregnant or menstruating and described the pain as emanating from the outer vaginal lip. Patrolers believed they were dealing with a significant tear so they gave her two additional pads and got her to reapply pressure while they bundled her onto a toboggan. Several minutes later, a female RN was able to do a full assessment and send the girl to the hospital for stitches.

INJURIES ARE RARELY so delicate. A couple of years ago, when a skier at Sun Peaks crashed at high speed, one of his skis shot ahead of him and speared itself into the deep snow. The end of the ski was sticking out in the direction from which it came when the skier arrived at the same spot. He caught the corner of the end of the ski on the thigh with enough force to actually ram the ski right through his leg.

While his friend blasted down the hill for help, the adrenaline-charged patient pulled the ski out of his leg. Bad idea. Had he severed his femoral artery, removing the ski would have been like pulling a plug and caused massive blood loss. It's very difficult to apply enough pressure to stop the bleeding from a severed femoral artery, especially on yourself when you don't know what you're doing. Fortunately, his blood loss, while significant, didn't kill him.

Patrolers applied absorbent pads and tight triangular bandages, strapped him into the rescue toboggan and gave him a free ride to the patrol hut. After some additional treatment, off he went to the hospital.

That's the kind of injury ski patrolers don't want to have to deal with. Even though pulling out the ski was medically the wrong thing to do, it did solve the problem of transporting him with a 180-centimetre ski sticking through his thigh.

Of course, the convenience of the ski patrolers isn't the issue. The issue is making sure a patient has a full recovery so they can continue skiing and snowboarding another day. We can pretty well expect one outstanding injury a year, but in all of these cases, everyone made a full recovery.

The only thing I'm unsure of is why my wallet ID doesn't say Ralph Klein, Middle Earth. ●

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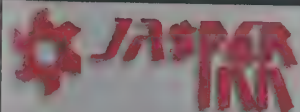
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The EASYRIDER Condition Report

Local

Rabbit Hill - Closed for the season.
Snow Valley - Closed for the season.

Alberta

Castle Mt. - 45-258cm base, 45cm of new snow, all lifts and 59 runs open
C.O.P. - Closed for the season
Fortress - 105-131cm base, 21cm of new snow, 5/5 lifts open
Lake Louise - 175-258cm base, 9cm of new snow, all lifts open
Marmot Basin - 90cm base, 0cm of new snow, 6 lifts and 84/84 runs open
Mt. Norquay - 115-150cm base, 12cm of new snow, 5/5 lifts and 28/28 runs open
Nakiska - 112cm of new snow, 18cm of new snow, 4/6 lifts and 32/32 runs open
Sunshine - 203cm base, 20cm of new snow, 12 lifts and 107 runs open

B.C.

Apex - 154cm base, 67/67 trails and 5/5 lifts open
Big White - 205cm base, 112/112 trails and 13/13 lifts open
Chrystal Mt. - Closed for the season
Fernie - 220cm base, 3cm of new snow, 10/10 lifts and 95/107 runs open
Kicking Horse - 167cm base, 3cm of new snow, 97/97 runs open
Kimberley - 105cm base, 0cm of new snow, 6 lifts and 71/75 runs open
Mt Washington - 332cm base, 50/50 trails and 8/8 lifts open
Panorama - 111cm base, 6cm of new snow, 9/9 lifts and 115 runs open
Silver Star - 167cm base, 107/107 trails and 11/11 lifts open
Sun Peaks - 147cm base, 10/10 lifts and 117/117 trails open
Whistler Blackcomb - 228cm base, 33/33 runs and 200/200 trails open
Whitewater - 227cm base, 0cm of new snow, all lifts open

U.S.A.

Big Mt. - 201cm base, 0cm of new snow, 8/11 lifts and 88 runs open
Big Sky - 200cm base, 0cm of new snow, 17/18 lifts and 150 trails open
49 Degrees - 76cm base, 0cm of new snow, 58 runs open
Lookout Pass - 157cm base, 0cm of new snow, 3/3 lifts and 23 runs open
Schweitzer Mt. - 109cm base, 0cm of new snow, 5/6 lifts open
Silver Mt. - 112cm base, 0cm of new snow, 6/7 lifts open
Sun Valley - 71cm base, 0cm of new snow, 19/19 lifts open


All conditions accurate as of April 6, 2004




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SNOWZONE



By JAMES RADKE

Checking in to see what condition you're in

There's no better indication of a snowboarder's ability than the way they handle themselves in a variety of snow conditions. Over the course of a season (or even a single day), you'll encounter every kind of snow: ice, powder, groomed and slush. Every time the conditions change, you must be able to adapt. But they can change without notice depending on temperature, wind, elevation, traffic on the hill, time of year and grooming schedule. So be prepared, and when you encounter a new condition don't run for cover—take control.

Powder is the best condition to ride in and is quite easy to adapt to. It's easy to ride, but powder snow can be more of a challenge than you think. The main adjustment when riding powder is to your fore and aft stance. It's all about simple balance adjustments, by which I mean moving forward or backward slightly over your board. In powder, everyone will generally tell you to sit back and ride. For the most part they're right, but the texture and depth of the snow are what's key. The deeper and heavier the snow, the more back of centre you should be. If it's dry and light, you can remain pretty centred on the board. Balance adjustment will come with time and experience.

Windblown snow, on the other hand, can be deceiving; it may look like powder, but underneath it may not be. When fresh snow falls on ice, be as light and smooth in your turns as you can. If you turn quickly and aggressively, you will end up on your butt. Think about keeping your base as flat as possible.

The easiest condition to deal with is a perfectly groomed hill. You can do no wrong on this snow. Just remember

not to get sloppy, because as soon as you relax and get careless, this snow can cause some serious problems. Most accidents happen on groomed runs at the end of the day when you're exhausted, so take it easy, eh?

Slush and corn snow develops in the warmer months. The warmer and busier it is on the hill, the softer and thicker the snow will become. These conditions create a very bumpy surface where small moguls can form easily and make for some very unpredictable snow. When the snow is soft, you won't have to use a lot of edge during your turns to cut through it. Speed control can be adjusted quite easily by traversing the fall line and keep your knees and ankles bent to absorb the bumps. Slush and corn snow will also have different consistencies all over the hill: loose and waterlogged in direct sunlight, and firmer in the shade. Take care not to fall in corn snow with no sleeves on. You'll end up with an extreme case of road rash.

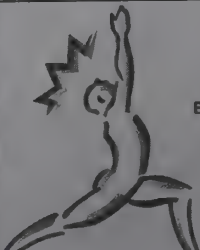
Ice and hardpack snow is the most challenging of all snow types. The most important thing here is to have good, sharp edges and know how to use them. Keeping equal pressure on both feet will help your board perform more efficiently and keeping your knees apart for a wider stance will also help. Speed control is important, since ice is such a fast surface. Finish your turns by heading across the fall line to keep your speed down. In the spring, icy conditions are a natural first thing in the morning, so stay away until things soften up.

Keep in mind that if you're uncomfortable with the snow conditions, do your best to adapt or simply seek out better conditions somewhere else on the hill. If conditions are dangerous or not to your liking and you've been on the hill for less than an hour, you can usually receive a refund or free ticket for another day. And there's always next winter. ☺

James Radke is the full-time, on-hill snowboard and ski coordinator at Calgary's Canada Olympic Park (www.canadaolympicpark.ca) as well as COP's senior coordinator of recreational programs and services at its sports school and mountain bike park. He's been a professional snowboard instructor for 11 years. James can be contacted at mountainbike@coda.ca.



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Positive reinforcements

Australian "positive music" purveyors Sekiden seek Canadian ears

By JERED STUFFCO

Okay, we all know Australians are a little nutty. As if their love of kangaroos, their responsibility for both "Crocodile" Dundee and *The Crocodile Hunter* and an appetite for cricket weren't enough proof, try this on for size: a small indie pop band from Brisbane with a penchant for fuzzy hooks and sunny melodies jumps on a plane in the middle of February (sans major label support and with the marketing budget of your little cousin's lemonade stand) lands in North America and proceeds to tour the continent in a small rented minivan. Sound crazy? Well, it should.

"There's not a lot of bands at our level who tour outside of Australia," chimes Sekiden's Mirko Vogel over a crackling cellphone somewhere outside Winnipeg. "In Australia, there's probably two or three hundred people that will come to see us in each city, but there's only about 10 venues in the whole country that we could do that at."

Maybe it's not so crazy after all. As a lot of Canadian musicians will tell you, it's tough to pay the bills by touring exclusively in your own country. To get technical for just a moment, if a "select market" will support a show every three to four

months, that still only adds up to about 30 gigs a year—a fine number for hobbyists and weekend warriors but a far cry from what most would call an "established career." Thus the effort to make inroads into that elusive American market. "You have to do it," Vogel says, "and we're really committed to what we're doing—coming over here gives us something to look forward to. It's totally worthwhile."

It's not the first time they've made the trip either. Last spring, Sekiden embarked upon a similar North American trek, but with only two months budgeted for the excursion, the trio felt that they'd barely scratched the surface. (Local indie

PREVIEW **POP**

poppers will recall Sekiden's performance at Seedy's with Boyracer.) "North America is such a huge place and there are so many cities to play," Vogel says, "that last time we were here there were even cities in Canada we didn't even get to—and we really love touring."

BIZARRELY, THE ROOTS of Sekiden's jubilant jams can be traced to their origins as a goth rock band. According to Vogel, while he was doing his goth 'n' roll duty, he was also playing in a pop combo with longtime friend Simon Graydon. When the pair lost their bass player, they began experimenting with four-track recordings. When Vogel's sister Seja began adding keyboards to the

pair's sonic sketches, the band was formed in earnest and the newly christened Sekiden began playing live. "I'm glad we don't have a bassist," Vogel says. "By not following the standard band formula, it has put limitations on us, but because we're limited dynamically, I think everything is straight to the point."

Straight to the point indeed—the band's new recording *Junior Fiction* is a sparkling mix of razor-sharp guitars, squeaky synths and bright melodies and should appeal to anyone who digs on the alt-pop sounds of early Ash, the Cars or Weezer.

Though the trio is spending a considerable amount of time south of the border, it's partially thanks to a Canadian connection that the band is on North American shores. Last year, Sekiden hooked up with Victoria pop stalwarts the Salteens, who were touring Australia at the time, and the two bands immediately hit it off. When it came time for Sekiden to find a Canadian distributor for their new album, the Salteens and their new label Boom-pa delivered.

"I call it happy music or positive music," Vogel says. "I know this sounds like a hippie thing to say, but we'd rather play music that puts out a happy vibe. If people are going to pay five or 10 bucks to see you, they shouldn't leave your show depressed." ●

SEKIDEN

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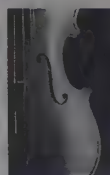
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classical notes

By ALLISON KYDD

Wandering minstrels

We've heard of the "brain drain"—folks looking for greener pastures because they're not appreciated or paid enough where they are. Classical musicians tend to have more positive reasons for leaving town and country and often come back home to Edmonton. Travel is not only broadening, they say: the experience gives them access to special programs and expands their reputations and contacts.

Three years ago, soprano Jolaine Kerley heeded the call of the early music program at the University of Indiana's School of Music and went south. It was a logical choice for her doctorate, and she took many specialized classes, such as Baroque Ornamentation and Lute Song. She reports that teachers like Marianne Hart and Paul Elliott helped her develop "the expressive side of singing" and taught her the stylistic elements of the various periods.

At the same time, Kerley considers her hometown a thriving, musically rich community. "I knew that before I went away," she says. "Now I appreciate it even more." She'll be a sessional instructor at the University of Alberta next year, no doubt returning to Pro Coro Canada as well. She and her schoolteacher husband move back to Edmonton in June, right after her first comprehensive exam, but she'll be going back and forth to do more comps and perhaps a recital lecture to complete her D.M.A.

In the meantime, she's in Edmonton to sing the "very high and ethereal" rôle of Mother of God for Ivan Moody's *Passion and Resurrection* as part of Pro Coro's traditional Good Friday evening concert. (Moody is a young British composer whose intensely spiritual works have an Eastern Orthodox flavour.) Last Sunday, Kerley was the soprano soloist for the fabulously successful performance of Bach's *St. John Passion*, which completed John Brough's concert requirements for his doctorate in choral conducting.

Other vocal soloists for the April 4 concert were tenor Timothy Shantz (also studying in Indiana), countertenor Andrew Pickett, tenor Robert King and bass Paul Grindlay. Grindlay and Shantz

sing the rôles of Christ and John the Evangelist again in the Good Friday production. This will make for interesting comparisons, since the two works are very different. "The tradition in the Orthodox Church is much more introspective, rather than dramatic," says Pro Coro artistic director Richard Sparks. The tessitura of the Moody work is lower as well, no doubt a welcome relief to Evangelist-narrator Shantz. The first half of the concert will consist of "catholic and mystical" shorter works.

Tenor Robert King, also of Pro Coro, is doing extra homework this week, as he's part of CBC's noon hour series Wednesdays at Winspear on April 14. With the help of Jeremy Spurgeon on organ and piano and French hornist Gerald Onciul, he'll be offering a variety of numbers, among them Leonard Bernstein's "Simple Song," Benjamin Britten's five-song cycle *On This Island* and his own composition *Pie Jesu*, which he describes as "a reflection of the attitude of modern society to the Divine."

Speaking of traveling, violinist and ESO concertmaster Martin Riseley came back from a year as associate concertmaster for the National Arts Orchestra full of new energy and more popular than ever. And so when teenage Armenian violin sensation Sergey Khachatryan found himself double-booked and canceled his Thursday, April 15 Robbins Lighter Classics gig in Edmonton, Riseley was the obvious choice to replace him. The showpiece of the concert, which also includes Strauss and Tchaikovsky serenades and Estacio's *A Farmer's Symphony*, is Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor. The work was completed in 1844 with violin virtuoso Ferdinand David in mind. (David also took on the rôle of collaborator, which no doubt explains why the cadenzas are written in and not left to the discretion of the performer.)

Violinist John Lowry, Riseley's replacement for the 2002-2003 season and now back in the Calgary Philharmonic, benefited as well. He solidified some old friendships and made some new ones. He, pianist John Robertson and cellist Olena Kilchuk rode the *Highway 2 Heaven* in collaboration with clarinetist Don Ross last spring; then Lowry and Robertson appeared at the Symphony Under the Sky last summer. On Easter Monday, April 12, the Calgary trio travels with violist Liza Scriggins (Lowry's partner) and cellist Tom Megee, meeting up with Edmonton's team of Debra Belmonte and Stefan Jungkind for concert three of *Sempre la Musica* at McDougall United Church (8 p.m.). The program is a whimsical combination of Haydn and Schubert piano trios, Enescu's *Concertpiece for Viola and Piano* and Tchaikovsky's *Souvenir de Florence for String Sextet*. ☺

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MUSIC



music notes

BY PHIL DUPERRON
AND JERED STUFFCO

Hypocritical mass

Skully and the Hypocrites (CD release) • With Mervyn Alvin and Buck Rocket • Stars (downstairs) • Sat, Apr 10 With all the so-called punk bands these days getting in touch with their emotional side, complete with three-part harmonies, Skully and the Hypocrites are a welcome change. Or rather, a fist-raising blast from the past, when

punk was a snarling call to arms against the establishment, not a commodity. Their straightforward punk anthems, fueled by righteous working-class anger, are as subtle as a kick in the teeth. Even though they're into their thirties with jobs and kids, they've never lost the desire to get onstage and shout out against the system. After years of slogging it out in bars and halls, they have no illusions about making it big, but gruff-voiced singer Laval Beazley (a.k.a. Skully) says it doesn't matter.

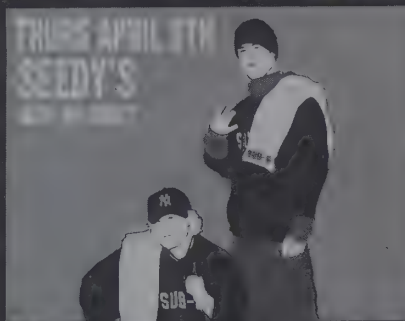
"What we're doing," he says, "is just balls-out rock 'n' roll. Go out and get sweaty and don't remember what happened in the morning, then try and put it all back together again after a great night. We do it not for the sake of money; it's just because the punk I see now—Simple Plan and all this bubblegum stuff—we feel the need to do it. Because we get chapped, quite frankly. We're not writing punk off, I'm not saying that. But we like the more

old-school stuff. Most of the bands we listen to are broken up."

Weathering the Storm, their second disc, is a testament to the band's durability. Formed from the ashes of hard-drinking rock renegades the Boozehounds, Skully and the Hypocrites have endured their fair share of controversy. In the past, their shows were plagued by violence when narrow-minded boot boys took their message of Canadian pride too far. Odd rumours and urban legends still haunt them—the latest claims Skully quit the band to become a cop. "I'd fail the test," he laughs. "I wouldn't want it anyway."

While Skully's daughter, who's taken to wearing studded wristbands, may have more in common with the new batch of young punks than he does, he still has a few words of wisdom to pass onto them. "What they need to do is keep strong, stand proud, keep their heads up and know what's right in their hearts," he says.

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"That's what we're there for, just to rally the troops, man." (PD)

Cool Keith

Falcnhawk • With National and Aurora Copper • Seedy's • Fri, Apr 9 When *Vue* rings up Falcnhawk's Kara Keith, she's in the middle of a serious chillout session. "I live a pretty stormy life," she says from a remote cabin somewhere in B.C. "I just took this week off because I've got a million projects on the go and I was starting to act crazy."

I don't mean to worry her, but it's doubtful that things will quiet down for Keith anytime soon. Her band's debut CD, *Hot Mouth*, has been garnering rave reviews from coast to coast and the video for the single "Olympia" has been getting video-play on Much and even MTV. Directed by Keith's roommate, filmmaker Carl Ayling, the video has created quite a buzz around Falcnhawk. "It's a visual masterpiece," enthuses Keith. "It was made for about \$17, but we had a ton of volunteers and everybody worked really hard on it—it's generated all this craziness."

A veteran of several Calgary rock outfits, Keith began Falcnhawk as a creative outlet for her solo tunes after becoming disillusioned with playing in bands. In fact, it was at a River City gig two years ago that Keith began to find the creative voice that would come to the fore two years later in Falcnhawk. "The band I was playing in at the time had a gig booked at the New City Likwid Lounge," she says, "and I remember not going to pick up any of the other band members because I was just fed up with it."

To make a short story even shorter, apparently Keith used the three-hour drive northward to compose loose instrumental sketches (with the help of her trusty Casio) and played the show alone complete with improvised lyrics. "That was the first time I thought, 'Hey, this kind of thing could really work,'" she says. "Now I just open my mouth and hope it doesn't sound too stupid—it's all metaphorical anyways, but I'd say a big part of my songs' charm is my uninhibitedness. There's not much editing going on." (JS)

Do you hear that, Mr. Anderson?

Wolf Colonel • With the Paperbacks and Change Methodical • Sidetrack Café • Tue, Apr 13 A that with Wolf Colonel's Jason Anderson is like having a one-on-one with Tony Robbins; even over e-mail, you can sense the positive vibe. Not only that, despite being out on the road for a month and a half, Anderson still seems like he's on cloud nine.

"The tour has been amazing," he raves via e-mail from Endering Records HQ in Winnipeg. "Every night feels like my favourite night of the week, and that is such an awesome sensation. The shows, big or small, have been incredible. My idea is, it doesn't matter how many people are there; all that matters is how great the show itself is."

Although Anderson has toured Wolf Colonel as a full band, the current jaunt has the performer on the road as



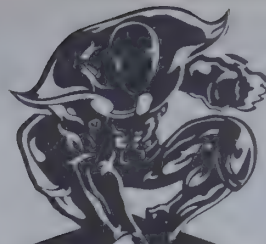
JuneFest • various locations • Apr 2-3 • reVUE Although it was extremely difficult to decide where to go during the two days of JuneFest, in the end, it didn't matter wherever you ended up was bound to be good. From quiet, sit-down venues like the Masonic Temple with polite crowds clapping for local acts like Bill Bourne and Jee Kraatz to the standing-room-only rock-outs at the Sidetrack and New City, Edmonton was a dis-transformed burrito. It was a weekend. Although there were plenty of under-the-radar acts, the many in-venue bands like the Paperbacks and Change Methodical, so many eager music lovers making the trek on a season of interminable hot couples who were lucky enough to get in. See Black 65 and The Dears in the all-star jam with Blackie and the Rodeo Kings, your best bet was to hunker down and enjoy instead of actually club crawling. (PD)

a solo act. According to Anderson, though, the lineup and even the instruments take a backseat to the overall performance. "I play shows with acoustics, electrics; I play shows with just a piano and sometimes I'll just sing a cappella, with no guitar at all," he says. "It's all fun and I try to just do what feels the best, night to night."

Though a lot of indie singer-songwriters have a reputation for being less than jovial in the live environment, Anderson says that his live performances are designed as enjoyment and not an excuse for chin-stroking or snobbery. "I just want to remember why we all started coming to shows in the first place," he says. "I want to feel

happy and uplifted and in love—shows should be that. That is my goal as a performer: to connect and touch through and really try to make something happen."

What's more, Anderson has successfully translated his positive mood into his songs, which have seen steady release on the esteemed Olympia, Washington label K Records. "I just write as much as I can," he says. "I love writing songs and I love thinking about my life. My whole idea as a person is to grow and change and constantly be challenged and inspired and joyful and in the moment. Tour and travel seems to be such a rich, invigorating catalyst for that. Life rules." (JS)



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HIV EDMONTON



April Newsletter

VUE
WEEKLY

Can we afford to neglect HIV prevention?

By Sherry McKibben, Executive Director

HIV Edmonton's finances have suffered recently. First there was our insurance bill (much higher) and then the confirmation of our major grant (lower). This was set against the announcement of new money for West Nile Virus and insurance industry profits.

Bad financial news for HIV Edmonton means bad news for Edmontonians. Inadequate financial support for HIV Edmonton (and other HIV/AIDS organizations in Alberta) means we are unable to deliver the necessary HIV prevention programming. Prevention remains the best and most cost effective strategy in our campaign against HIV. The latest figure I have heard for treatment of one HIV positive person is in excess of \$600,000. This year Edmonton's HIV grant will be much less than that at only \$450,000.

In the January edition of HIV Edmonton's newsletter in VUE, there was an article about HIV Edmonton's insurance woes. While I am pleased to report that we did obtain insurance and are able to continue to run all our programs, our costs have escalated 600 percent. In 2002 our total insurance costs were \$3,500; in 2003 they were \$4,400 and in 2004 they will be \$20,000. Higher insurance premiums mean less prevention programming - fewer presentations, no

staffing to develop prevention strategies with youth or women, and fewer harm reduction initiatives for all high risk populations.

We have also just received notification of our federal/provincial funding allocations for the next three years. HIV Edmonton will receive less financial support from the federal/provincial HIV program in the next fiscal year than it did in the past fiscal year. This is happening despite the fact that there is an ever increasing number of HIV positive people who critically need counseling and assistance to manage their disease and lessen their risk behaviors for themselves and others. This is happening despite the fact there is less public awareness about HIV and AIDS than ever.

These two pieces of financial news for HIV Edmonton were accompanied by related news stories. First the provincial government announced \$4 million in new funding for West Nile Virus prevention. While I accept the need for West Nile Virus prevention strategies, the statistics would suggest that funding for HIV is at the very least as important. Since there is new money available for West Nile Virus, why not also for HIV, which is a somewhat more pressing issue. Let me make some comparisons:

The Disease	West Nile Virus	HIV/AIDS
Cases in Canada	1335	55,000
Cases in Alberta	275	3500
Deaths in Alberta	0	1150
New Cases in 2003		180
New Money for Prevention	\$4,000,000	\$185,000
Previous Funding		\$2,330,000
Total Prevention Funding	\$4,000,000	\$2,515,000

HIV is transmitted from person to person. Prevention is the only cure. Prevention requires adequate funding for staff to deliver the messages and develop programs from high-risk populations. Further, for volunteers to make effective contributions, they need training and support. HIV prevention programming desperately needs additional funding; preventing one case has the domino effect of preventing more.

The second story which caught my attention was the story about insurance industry profits going up by 600 percent or more in the past year. A 600 percent increase in profit in the insurance industry is exactly how much HIV Edmonton's insurance went up. Should funds from donors or government

grants end up as profits for insurance companies? Liability claims in the nonprofit sector are very rare, yet our costs have increased dramatically.

Because of these financial events, HIV Edmonton faces some hard choices. We already know that programs for women and youth will be curtailed. In the past four years we have lost more than four staff positions due to decreasing grants. Our capacity to truly provide the full range of prevention programming needed for Edmonton is impaired. In the long run this means more infections and higher health care costs. Can we as a community afford to continue to place HIV/AIDS on the back burner? HIV has not and will not go away. Prevention is the only cure.



HIV Edmonton, as part of its international commitment to the fight against HIV and AIDS, will be sending two staff members to the Claudia A. Foundation and other agencies in Suriname over the next two years. There, our staff will share their experience and expertise with AIDS workers to help them develop programs to deal with the AIDS pandemic in South America. But to get to Suriname, we need your help. If you have Air Miles you don't expect to use, and would be willing to exchange them for a ticket for one of our staff members, please contact HIV Edmonton's Executive Director Sherry McKibben at 488-5742 ext. 236.

From The Desk of A Righteously Indignant Professional

By Trudy K. Owen

Being homeless is so much more than not having a place to call home. Having a place to call home is a foundational requirement. It is the place in which we can feed our spirit, heal our wounds, and replenish our hope. Many of the HIV positive people we see at HIV Edmonton are homeless, and suffer from the added difficulties that homelessness entails.

Agencies that provide access to damage deposit funds tend to be geared toward a specific segment of the population, such as youth entering an independent living program, battered women and, until recently, those who are HIV positive. There are no options for people who do not meet the specific criteria of each category. Financial support, received from Social Services (SFI), Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH), or Canada Pension Plan (CPP) does not provide any damage deposit funding for their clients to access housing. Having appropriate and acceptable identification is required prior to gaining access to financial support programs. (However, no funding is available through these agencies for the acquisition personal identification.) One other requirement is that the people applying for services have an address.

These two requirements alone present a catch 22 situation. Damage deposits are an expected requirement for securing housing. People are falling through the cracks in a system theoretically designed to assist those who are least

able to assist themselves. Fortunately, there are agencies and services that provide assistance with rental listings, phone access, bus tickets, showers, and even laundry. All of these can be utilized to minimize the barriers.

Overcoming the barriers of homelessness is a task that requires monumental physical and emotional endurance on the part of the person seeking a place to call home. The task of finding a home is soon seen as an exercise in futility, which is magnified by the daily struggle to obtain food and a safe place to sleep, compounded by multiple daily experiences pregnant with judgments. Any remaining sliver of hope fades in the face of such rejections and indignities.

The sense of hopelessness can quickly become overwhelming the barriers are perceived as far too immense to conquer. Physically and mentally depleted, the spiral of despair gathers momentum, often leading to suicidal thoughts, attempts and completions. I am grateful for clients who are able to vent their frustrations, for it affirms that they still have some fight remaining, on which hope can be nourished.

Health care issues, both physical and mental, are well recorded by medical centers and hospitals. The costs saving measures of denying access to damage deposits, by both government and non-government organizational bodies, is financially far less than the increased costs absorbed by the health care system. The loss of human dignity and ultimately, human life is exponentially greater.

HIV/AIDS and Services to Men On the Streets

Robert Wm Smith

The stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS affects access to services and service availability generally. HIV Edmonton is recognizing that stigma is one of the key barriers that men face when accessing services.

The majority of HIV positive clients that HIV Edmonton serves are male, highly addicted, homeless, living in shelters or on the street, suffering from mental health issues, suffering from depression and are Aboriginal.

Internalized stigma over HIV/AIDS creates secretiveness, stress, and isolation.

HIV status creates other hurdles to overcome, including shame, hopelessness, self-loathing, and violence. Clients often live in fear of their HIV status being discovered, fear of violence, fear of losing supports and fear of being thought of as gay and/or dirty. Street involved males are less likely to access services unless they are in an emergency.

When people do seek treatment, they often run into barriers that frustrate their attempts to overcome their addictions. Most services do not operate under harm reduction principles, which means that services for addictions are based on an abstinence model that fails to address the issues causing addiction. The expectations of mainstream methadone programs are difficult to sustain and are implemented independently of human issues surrounding addiction.

Non-compliance to medical regime and/or non-adherence to organization guidelines are often seen as a lack of will/desire to change. Moreover, lack of access to mental health services contributes to addictions; but at the same time, access to these services is often curtailed when people are dealing with addictions issues. The result is a vicious circle that leaves people discouraged and no further ahead than when they first sought treatment.

Aboriginal males experience added stigma. Many men in Aboriginal communities have not sought healing from abuse in residential schools. They carry these psychological scars with them, and the cycle of abuse and addiction continues uninterrupted. General health and social service structure are not open to traditional healing. Community based traditional healing programs are often under funded and lacking healers and elders.

Stigma of HIV/AIDS is linked hysterically to "life-style choices." That is to say, sexual orientation and substance abuse are linked hysterically to moral and religious philosophy. "Life-style choices" provide a platform to justify health and social funding decisions that lead to severely under funded initiatives. In this way, the stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS not only places a social burden on society's most vulnerable people, but it also erects a financial barrier that harms those who are most in need of help.

HIV Edmonton - Dynamics workshop

Saturday May 8 • 10:00 am to 4:00pm
10550-102 Street (HIV Edmonton).

10:00 am	HIV 101 and context
11:00 am	Hepatitis C 101 and context
12:00 -1:00 pm	lunch provided.
1:00 pm	diversity panel
2:45 pm	Harm reduction and Motivational Interviewing

To register call Jason at 488-5742 ext. 235
Cost: \$50; partial or full scholarships available on request

The HIV Network of Edmonton is currently recruiting volunteer board members who are willing to contribute their skills and time to the organization. The board meets monthly to provide continued support, direction and leadership to the agency. Active participation in fund development - both operational and capital - is a major goal for the upcoming board term.

HIV Edmonton educates, supports and advocates for those infected and affected by HIV and related conditions. HIV Edmonton provides counseling services, engages in prevention and health promotion activities.

HIV Edmonton seeks board members who are able to commit to a two year term. Interested individuals are invited to submit a resume and expression of interest to:

Bernie Modrovsky, Board Chair, HIV Edmonton
#105 10550 - 102 Street
Edmonton, Alberta, T5H 2T3
Fax: 488 - 5742
Email: b.modrovsky@hivedmonton.com

Would it kill you to 'Take a Break'?

Stephanie Helm, RSW

Giving your self a break from something can mean quitting the morning donut or giving yourself a day off from your 50 hour work week, or walking at lunch and eating a healthier meal. All of these things could aid in reducing harm to your body. However, it is hard to change, isn't it? We all know that it is hard to make a sudden dramatic change, and that it may be more beneficial to take small steps to gain confidence like taking a break from that donut, even if it's just for today. This is what a group of young, at-risk (some highly drug addicted) youth concluded as they drafted up harm reduction tips for crystal meth users.

Over the last few months, I have had the pleasure of coordinating a group of young people for a harm reduction project at HIV Edmonton. The goal of the project was to learn and practice harm reduction, and to create a public service announcement for television broadcast. As youth learned about the health risks associated with substance abuse and became aware of the risks they were at, they also had the opportunity to create harm reduction tips for methamphetamine users who do not want to quit, or feel

they are unable to. The group found out that this information was vital for users as it would aid in sparing their bodies from breakdown, disease, or even death.

The message that hit home, and that is displayed in the PSA created by the youth was, "If you are using meth, you have to take a break or it can kill you." The group was also able to discover how this drug was affecting their friends. Members discussed battling with such things as Hepatitis C, psychological effects of the drug, and even drug overdose. One member (17 years old) explained that she 'died for two minutes' and was saved by a university hospital medical team this past November. She would have died if she had not been practicing the harm reduction tip to use with a trustworthy friend in case of emergency. She has also practiced taking breaks from using, as it has been extremely difficult to quit.

So what can you take a break from that would reduce harm to yourself? Something that you could just not envision quitting? Perhaps making up a list of one's own harm reduction tips could help more than just drug users. It could help all of us.

Disenfranchising of our most vulnerable

Jason Watt, MSW, RSW.

Addictions and Methadone Program, HIV Edmonton

As a social worker at HIV Edmonton it is all too common to be engaged in helping individuals access emergency shelter or short-term accommodation. What is also becoming more common is to hear the following responses while trying to meet a client's basic needs: Your client... "is too sick," "is not sick enough," "is too high," "is too drunk," "doesn't follow the rules," "is too old," "is too young," "doesn't meet our criteria," "has been banned because they would not hand in their prescription medication," "we don't accept individuals on methadone," "it's too late in the afternoon for emergency intake," "we don't take homeless individuals," and the list goes on.

I don't get it. What is with all the barriers?

Do inner-city individuals struggling with addictions and needing emergency services have fewer rights than you or I? Do they have to give up

their pride, dignity and submit totally in order to have the "privilege" of having a place to sleep and a meal?

It is not uncommon for us to be working with individuals who, after many years of living with HIV in the inner-city and struggling with addictions, are beginning to experience the ravages of a disease that, with or without treatment, all too often ends in death. These individuals are hanging on to their lives, their health, wasting away, on the edge, balancing, all alone. Just one night sleeping in a cold alley can, and often does, upset the balance leading to overdose, pneumonia, infection, abuse, rape or even death.

As social workers or service providers, we are increasingly embracing the merits of harm reduction and recognizing the importance of valuing an "individual's way of being in the world." We know that in order for ser-

vices to be truly effective we must recognize the variable needs of our clients. We scrutinize the structural inequalities of society, the misuse of power, the tyranny of the "majority" and the endless bureaucratic labyrinth. We loudly advocate publicly for the rights of our clients. Why then do we often re-create these oppressive, non-responsive systems in our social service organizations?

Of course we need some rules in order to operate, but rules and structure do not have to be inhumane and non-respectful. They need not be enforced with cold abandonment. Being flexible, working with a client or making exceptions does not lead to anarchy and chaos. Sure, imposing rigid structure and rules on clients makes it easier for us as social workers and community agencies...but it sounds kind of unethical to me.

The Art of Living

A black-tie fundraiser for HIV Edmonton that promises dancing, dining and displays from some of Alberta's most renowned artists.

The event takes place at the Hotel MacDonald on Saturday, June 5, 2004. There are only 200 tickets available, and they are expected to go quickly so order them soon.

For more details or to purchase tickets, please e-mail events@hivedmonton.com or call (780) 488-5742 ext. 0.

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10. Broken Social Scene - Bee Hives (a&c)
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12. Blonde Redhead - Misery Is A Butterfly (4ad)
13. Corb Lund Band - Modern Pain (corb lund)
14. No Depression - What It Sounds Like Vol.1 (dualtone)
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16. Descendents - Cool To Be You (fat)
17. Fractal Pattern - No Hope But Mt. Hope (method)
18. The Flatlanders - Wheels Of Fortune (new west)
19. Mae Moore & Lester Quiltzau - Oh My! (plant & garden)
20. The Postal Service - Give up (sub pop)
21. For You - Tribute To Compromise (united edge)
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23. Falconhawk - Hotmouth (saved by radio)
24. Joel Kroeker - Melodrama (true north)
25. The Casualties - On The Front Line (sidedonedummy)
26. Bring You To Your Knees - A Tribute To Guns N'Roses (law of inertia)
27. Calexico - Convict Pool (quaterstick)
28. Destroyer - Your Blues (merge)
29. Keb' Mo' - Keep It Simple (okeh)
30. Paul Kelly - Ways & Means (true north)

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This 2 cd set is all blues fans dream come true. Featuring the many talents of everyone from ZZ Top, Keb Mo, John Hammond & Koko Taylor to Son House & Buddy Guy.

The ULTIMATE Blues Collection.

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Fax your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to listings@vive.ca
Deadline is Friday at 3pm

THU LIVE MUSIC

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Patsy Amico and Brian Gregg (roots); 9pm-1am

BLUES ON WHYTE The Twisters

CASINO (YELLOWHEAD) Much with Jody Johnson (pop/rock)

CHUCK'S RESTAURANT Andrew Glover Trio; 4-7pm

COOK COUNTY SALOON Battle of the Bands; 8pm; no cover

DUSTER'S PUB Jam hosted by Brian Petch

FOUR ROOMS (DOWNTOWN) Dino Dominielli

J.J.'s Open stage with cover band

THE JOINT Bounce, High School Jam; 8pm-midnight

KINGSNIGHT PUB Stereo Therapy

RATTLESNAKE SALOON Samantha King

RED'S Exit 303, Joshua's Habit, Fear Zero, Krome; all ages event; 7pm (door), 8pm (show); \$4 (after 8pm)/free (before 8pm)

SEEDY'S Hot Chicks Hotter Wax; ALCB (Alberta Local Control Board), with DJs

SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN) Derrick Sigurdson

SHERLOCK HOLMES (CAPILANO) Jimmy Whiffen

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM) Tim Becker

SIDETRACK CAFE The Marshall Lawrence Band (CD release party), The Buffalo Brothers; 9pm; \$10 (adv)/\$12 (door)

URBAN LOUNGE Lost Action Heroes, Today and After; \$5

CLASSICAL

CAFÉ SELECT Bonnie Gregory and Rob Taylor (celtic harp and guitar); 6:30-9pm

McDOUGALL UNITED CHURCH The Crucifixion: The McDougall United Church Choir featuring David Pasieka (tenor), Timothy E. Nagurski (organ), Laurena Pawlowski (conductor); 7:30pm; 428-1818

WINSPEAR CENTRE Canadian Chamber Orchestra: Easter Special with Svetlana Sech (soprano), Nan Hughes (mezzo-soprano), Grzegorz Nowak (conductor); 8pm

A STARS Main Room: Slam on the Breaks: Hellfy, Sweet, LP, Atomatik, Jameel, Xu, Deadly, Jimmies; 9pm (door)

THE ARMOURY Lo Ball Night; top 40

BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE Big Mouth Entertainment

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Trump: inthrona with the DDK Soundsystem

HEMPHILL AND CASTLE ON WHYTE Sleeman Method Thursdays, hip hop, downtempo with DJ Headspin

ESCAPE Long Weekend R&B Dance Party: With DJ Sivu Play (Montreal), Urban Metropolis Sound Crew; no minors event; 8pm (door); \$7 (adv); tickets available at Underground (WEM), Soular (WEM), Method (Whyte)

FILTHY MCNASTY'S Punk Rock Bingo: With DJ S.W.A.G.

GAS PUMP Ladies Nike: Top 40/dance with DJ Christian

GUILTY MARTINI Phoenix Thursdays: House with Big Daddy, Trapz and guests

HALO DJ Jason Hodges

LONGRIDERS Hot Latin Nights; free dance lessons 8-9:30pm

NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE Rub-A-Dub Thursdays: rocksteady, dub reggae with DJ Jeubus and the Operation Redication Sound System

NEW CITY SUBURBS Progress: electro/new wave with DJ Miss Mannered and guests

BAR Zappacosta: 8:30pm; \$15 (adv)/\$20 (door)

BRIMESMIGHT PUB Powerhouse

LEGENDS Ruminators

LONGRIDERS David Bowie Pre/Post Party: Love Junk

NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE Darkson Tribe (CD release party), Peep Game, DJs Shortround, Echo

THE PUB Mark McGarrigle

RATTLESNAKE SALOON Samantha King

RED'S Cassidy, Calico Drive, Acton's Cats, Reframed; no minors; 8pm (door), 9pm (show); \$4 (after 8pm)/free (before 8pm)

REXALL PLACE David Bowie, The Polyphonic Spree

SEEDY'S Falconhawk, National Aurora Copper

SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN) Derrick Sigurdson

SHERLOCK HOLMES (CAPILANO) Jimmy Whiffen

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM) Tim Becker

SIDETRACK CAFE Division and Wellesley (CD release party), The Fembots, Sekiden; 9pm; \$8

URBAN LOUNGE Granny Dynamite; \$5

WYNNECROFT COMMUNITY HALL John Lacey, Eva and Company, High Point; presented by the 40 Town Folk Club; 7:30pm (door), 8pm (concert); \$10; tickets available at TIX on the Square 420-1757

THE STANDARD Roger Sanchez, Nestor Delano, Tripswitch, Johnny D'Erico; \$20 (adv); tickets available at TicketMaster, Foothill Underground (WEM), Colourblind

STARS NIGHTCLUB Main Room: Slam on the Breaks: Jimmies and Deadly

VELVET LOUNGE Urban Substance: hip hop/R&B and of exams jam with Spincycle, Invinceable, J-Money, Sean B

WYNNECROFT COMMUNITY HALL Thursday Night Shake Down: Motown, northern soul, funk, 60s pop with DJs Travay and Alex Zwoof

WINSPEAR CENTRE PASSION AND RESURRECTION: By Ivan Moody, presented by Pro Coro Canada featuring Jolaine Kerley (soprano), Timothy Shantz (tenor), Paul Grindlay (bass), Chamber Orchestra, Richard Sparks (conductor); 7:30pm; \$23.50-\$33.50 (group rates available, student rush tickets available on day of concert); tickets available at Winspear box office, TIX on the Square 420-1757

WINSPEAR CENTRE 78th Fraser Highway (CD release party); 8pm (door), 9pm (show); \$6 (member)/\$10 (guest); tickets available at TicketMaster 451-8000

YARDBIRD SUITE Dave Babcock (CD release party); 8pm (door), 9pm (show); \$6 (member)/\$10 (guest); tickets available at TicketMaster 451-8000

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MUSIC WEEKLY

YOUR GUIDE TO LIVE MUSIC IN EDMONTON

BAR Zappacosta: 8:30pm; \$15 (adv)/\$20 (door)

BRIMESMIGHT PUB Powerhouse

LEGENDS Ruminators

LONGRIDERS David Bowie Pre/Post Party: Love Junk

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GAS PUMP Top 40/dance with DJ Christian

GUILTY MARTINI Diva Night Party with DJ Loose Cannon

THE JOINT Fresh Fridays: Urban by Urban Metropolis Sound Crew

MANHATTAN CLUB R&B Fridays: hip hop/R&B with DJ Mad Noise

NEWCASTLE PUB AND GRILL Music with DJ Will Hill; 9pm

RATTLESNAKE SALOON DJ Butter

THE ROOST Upstairs: Euro Blitz: best new European music with DJ Outtafunk, DJ Jazzwig and male stripper; \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member)

ROXY ON WHYTE Babylon Fridays: retro/R&B/dance with DJ Extreme

SAVOY Electronica with DJs Bryana, Chris

THE STANDARD Triple X Fridays: top 40/dance

STARS NIGHTCLUB Main Floor: Live Music Night with Brian; 10pm (door)

STONEHOUSE PUB Alternative, house, hip hop, top 40 with DJ Rage and DJ Weezy; 9pm

SUGARBOWL Listen: ambient/IDM/electronica by Ariel and Joel

T AFTERNOONS House/breakbeat with DJ Hippo, MC Floppo, LJ, Juicy, Dragon, Old Bitch

YOUR APARTMENT House with DJ Tomek

A STARS Upper Room: Accord Record Showcase: Trainwreck Diaries, Broken Chairs Main Room: Skully and the Hypocrites (CD release party), Mervyn Albin; 9pm (door)

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Chuck Rose

BLACK DOG Hair of the Dog; Kat Danser; 4-6pm

BLIND BIG PUB AND GRILL Open Stage; 3-9:30pm

BLUES ON WHYTE The Twisters

CAPITAL HILL PUB The Flyin' Crow Dads

CASINO (EDMONTON) Colleen Rae and Cornerstone (country/rock)

CASINO (YELLOWHEAD) Much with Jody Johnson (pop/rock)

DRUID Harpdog Brown; 3-7pm

EDMONTON ART GALLERY After Dark: J.F.F. Trio; 7pm; \$15

FESTIVAL PLACE Man at Work: Colin Hay (folk/singer-songwriter); 7:30pm; \$23 (cabaret)/\$21 (theatre seat); tickets available at Festival Place box office 449-3378, TicketMaster 451-8000

FOUR ROOMS (DOWNTOWN) Don Berner

HIGHRUM Smak

J.J.'s Cinch (rock)

JEFFREY'S CAFE AND WINE BAR Zappacosta; 8:30pm;

KINGSNIGHT PUB Powerhouse

LEGENDS Ruminators

THE LOCKER ROOM Patsy Amico and Brian Gregg (roots); 10pm-2am

LONGRIDERS America Rosa, X-Band (Latin); \$8

O'BRYNE'S Chris Winters and Scott Peters; 3-6pm;

POWER PLANT Deep Fine Kerd, Kerdbogs, Whitemud Drive

THE PUB Mark McGarrigle

RATTLESNAKE SALOON Samantha King

ESCAPE Evolution Saturdays: house, retro dance

FILTHY MCNASTY'S Shake Yo' Ass with DJ Lusion

THE FOX Top 40 retro dance

GAS PUMP Top 40/dance with DJ Christian

GUILTY MARTINI Guilty Groove Party

JIRON HORSE Urban dance party with DJ 420

THE JOINT Get a Nightlife: top 40/dance/urban

MANHATTAN CLUB Sinfu Saturdays: top 40/dance

NEWCASTLE PUB AND GRILL DJ Shawn Z

NEW CITY SUBURBS Saturdays 5-11 P.M.: punk/alt/pop/dance with Blue Ivy and Nikofoe

ORLANDO'S II PUB AND GRILL Music with DJ Will Hill, 9pm

RATTLENAKE SALOON DJ Butter

THE ROOST Upstairs: Monthly theme parties with DJ Jazzy, New music with DJ Dan and Mike; Downstairs: Retro music, \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member)

ROXY ON WHYTE Session Saturday: dance/R&B, hip hop with DJ Extreme

SAVOY Deep house with Winston Roberts

STARS NIGHTCLUB Main Floor: Live Metal Night with Blue

STONEHOUSE PUB Top 40 with DJ City

TONIC AFTER DARK Uncensored Saturdays: R&B, hip hop, old school with Urban Metropolis Sound Crew

Y AFTERHOURS Darcy Klein, Donovan, DJ Jucy, Luke Morrison, DJ Ryan Wade

HOUSE APARTMENT Foundations: DJ Dennis Zaz and Rackman Powers

SUN LIVE MUSIC

BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL Open stage jam with The River City Rhythm Kings; 7-11pm; no cover

BLUES ON WHYTE Blue Mondays: Jam with Tim Lee and the Revelators and guest

L.B.'S PUB Open stage with Randy Martin; 9pm-2am

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM) Jimmy Whiffen

BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL The Rusty Reed Band; 7:30-11:30pm; no cover

BLUES ON WHYTE King Muskala

ECCO PUB Open jam session hosted by Imaginary Friend (blues, roots); 4-8pm

LEGENDS Ruminators

O'BYRNE'S Joe Bird's Ine Jam; 9:30pm

RENDEZVOUS God Awful, Blasphemus, Black Listed, Son of a Gun

SIDETRACK CAFÉ Under the Covers Sundays: Neevah, DJ Dudeman; 9pm; \$6

CLASSICAL

CAFÉ SELECT Thomas Mead (lute); 5:30-9pm

DJS

CALIENTE NIGHTCLUB Ladies Night: urban with DJ Invincible

DECADANCE Worship Sundays: mixed with Big Daddy, DTR and guests; 10am-close

MANHATTAN CLUB Industry Sundays: top 40, dance/R&B

NEW CITY SUBURBS Lounge Atmosphere: funk, rare groove, hip hop with DJ Cool Curt

THE ROOST Betty Ford Hangover Clinic Show Beer Bash: every long weekend with DJ Jazzy; \$2

SAVOY French Pop: mixed with Deja DJ

SUGARBOWL Multipurpose: Eclectic electronic hosted by Prosper and Eli with guests

ION LIVE MUSIC

BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL Open stage jam with The River City Rhythm Kings; 7-11pm; no cover

BLUES ON WHYTE Blue Mondays: Jam with Tim Lee and the Revelators and guest

L.B.'S PUB Open stage with Randy Martin; 9pm-2am

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM) Jimmy Whiffen

SIDETRACK CAFÉ Open stage Mondays: Ben Spencer; 9pm; no cover

CLASSICAL

MEDICAL LIMITED CHURCH Sempre la Musica Featuring John Lowry and Debra Belmonte (violin), Stefan Jungland and Liza Scnggins (viola), Tom Megee and Olana Kichyk (cello), John Robertson (piano); 8pm; \$16 (adults)/\$12 (student/senior); tickets available at TIX on the Square 420-1757, door

DJS

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE It Doesn't Taste Like Chocolate Easter Party: with DJ Penny

DUSTER'S DJ Dan

FILTHY MCNASTY'S Metal Mondays: with DJ S.W.A.G

O'BYRNE'S Hip Mondays: no cover with DJ Finnegan, live music

TUE LIVE MUSIC

BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL Patrick Sean Earl; 7pm; no cover

BLUES ON WHYTE Pete Turland

DRUID Open stage with Chris Wynters

LEGENDS Open jam hosted by Gary Thomas

O'BYRNE'S Celtic night with Shannon Johnson and friends; 9:30pm

SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN) Tim Becker

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM) Jimmy Whiffen

SIDETRACK CAFÉ The Paperbacks, Wolf Colonel; 9pm; \$7

YARDBIRD SUITE Tuesday Jam Session: hosted by Mo Lefever Combo; 8pm (door), 9pm (show); \$3

YOUR APARTMENT Open stage with Cypsy Ray and Melissa Ann; 9pm

DJS

BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE Karaoke and DJ Tues with Bun Rust Professional Music Productions

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Viva: with DJ Sean

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB Top 40 with DJ Stephan

CALIENTE NIGHTCLUB Basement Tuesdays: hip hop/R&B/reggae/dancehall with Bomb Squad, DJ Invincible, Q.B.

DECADANCE Too Cool for Tuesdays: Ambient, Trip hop, goa and glitch with Galatea, Bstream and guests

DUSTER'S DJ "Name a Tune" Dan

FILTHY MCNASTY'S Twisted Trivia: with DJ Whit-Ford

GAS PUMP Karaoke contest with DJ Gord

NEW CITY SUBURBS Resurrection: industrial/EBM/electro/goth with Nik Roseleya

THE ROOST Hot Butt Contest: with DJ Janny; 8-midnight; \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member)

SEEDY'S Tuesday Nights with DJ Miss Mannered

WED LIVE MUSIC

A STARS Upper Room: Fresh beats: Dusty Grooves, Johnny Five, Quinn the Eskimo, Villain; Main Room: Tuffhouse: Reno and Mr "O"; 10pm (door)

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Open mic with Knotwork, 8pm

BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL Wednesday night jams; 7-11pm

BLUES ON WHYTE Pete Turland

MYER HOROWITZ Theatre Hawksley Workman, Joel Kroecker; 8pm (door); tickets available at Ticketmaster 451-8000, SUB/HUB/CAB info desks, Blackbird Myozok

O'BYRNE'S Chris Wynters and friends; 9:30pm

PLEASANTVIEW HALL Northern Bluegrass Circle

Music Society bluegrass jam; 7:30pm

ROSSDALE COMMUNITY HALL Little Flower open stage hosted by Brian Gregg; 8pm

SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN) Tim Becker

SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM) Jimmy Whiffen

SIDETRACK CAFÉ Colin Linden, Shuyler Jansen; 9pm; \$10

URBAN LOUNGE Krome; \$5

WINSPEAR CENTRE Los Lobos; 7pm (door), 8pm; \$40; tickets available at Winspear Centre box office 428-1414

DJS

BACKROOM VODKA BAR Wild Cherry: deep house/progressive/breaks with Tripwitch and guests

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Gilter Clutch: country, roots

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB Top 40 with DJ Stephan

FILTHY MCNASTY'S Mix Tape Bar Star College Nite: with DJ Rock 'n' Rogers

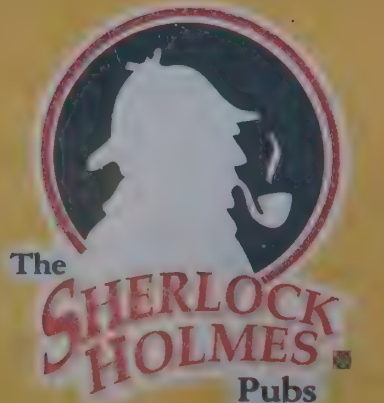
GAS PUMP Karaoke contest with DJ Gord

LE GLOBE Latin Rhythms with DJ Moreno

NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE New City Dots: Glam, punk, metal with Skinny I, JJ Frenchy

THE ROOST Amateur Strp: Weena Luv, Sticky Vicky with DJ Alvaro; \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member)

YOUR APARTMENT Big Rock Indie Rock Night: indie rock with DJ Shoulbeinaband



www.thesherlockholmes.com

WEST MALL

APR 8-10 TIM BECKER

APR 12-17 JIMMY WHIFFEN

CAPILANO

APR 8-10 JIMMY WHIFFEN

APR 15-17 VYVES LECROIX

DOWNTOWN

APR 8-10 DERRICK SIGURDSON

APR 13-17 TIM BECKER

VENUE GUIDE

A STARS Upper Fl, 10545-82 Ave, 439-1422

THE ARMOURY 10310-85 Ave, 702-1800

ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL 7704-104 St, 432-4611

BACKROOM VODKA BAR 10324-82 Ave, upstairs, 436-4418

BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE Continental Inn, 16625 Stony Plain Road, 484-7751

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE 10425-82 Ave, 439-1082

BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL 32 St, Anne St, St. Albert

BLUES ON WHYTE 10329-82 Ave, 439-5058

BOOTS 10242-106 St, 423-5014

BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB 11725B Jasper Ave, 488-6636

CAFÉ SELECT 10018-106 St, 428-1629

CALIENTE NIGHTCLUB 10815 Jasper Ave, 425-0850

CAPITAL HILL PUB 14203 Stony Plain Rd, 454-3063

CASINO (EDMONTON) 7055 Argyle Rd, 463-9467

CASINO (YELLOWHEAD) 12464-153 St, 463-9467

CHANCE RESTAURANT 10100-101 St, 424-0400

COOK COUNTY SALOON 8010 Gateway Blvd, 432-2665

COWBOYS 10102-180 St, 481-8739

CRISTAL LOUNGE 10336 Jasper Ave, 426-7521

DAVE'S WORLD PUB 170 St, Stony Plain Road, 486-4448

DECADANCE 10018-105 St, 990-1792

DONNA 10177-99 St, 429-3338

DRUID 11606 Jasper Ave, 454-9928

EXPRESSIONZ 6402-118 Ave, 474-5554

ECCO PUB 5420-96 St, 435-5050

EDMONTON ART GALLERY Sir Winston Churchill Sq, 420-1757

ELPHANT AND CASTLE ON WHYTE 10314-82 Ave, 439-4545

ESCAPE WEM, 489-1330

EXPRESSIONZ CAFÉ Eastwood Community Hall, 86 St, 118 Ave, 471-9125

FATBOYZ 6104-104 St, 437-3633

FESTIVAL PLACE Sherwood Park, 449-3378/451-8000

FILTHY MCNASTY'S PUB 10511-82 Ave, 432-5224

THE FOX 10125-109 St, 990-0660

FOUR BOWLS RESTAURANT (EDMONTON) Edmonton Centre, 102 Ave, Entrance, 426-4767

GAS PUMP 10166-114 St, 488-4841

LE GLOBE 14921 Stony Plain Rd, 489-1022

GUILTY MARTINI SOUTH 10338-81 Ave, 433-7183

HALO 10538 Jasper Ave, 423-HALO

HIGHRUN 4926-98 Ave, 440-2233

JIRON HORSE 1701 Gateway Blvd, 438-1907

J.J.'S 13160-118 Ave, 489-7462

JEFFREY'S CAFÉ AND WINE BAR 9640-142 St, 451-8890

JOHN L. HAAR THEATRE Centre for the Arts, 10045-156 St, 497-4436

THE JOINT WEM, 486-3013

KINGSKNIGHT PUB 9221-34 Ave, 433-2599

L.B.'S 111-23 Akns Dr, St. Albert, 460-9100

LEGENDS 6104-172 St, 481-2786

THE LOCKER ROOM Econo Lodge, 10209-100 Ave, 454-9521

LONGRIDERS 11733-78 St, 479-7400

MANHATTAN CLUB 10345-103 St, 423-7884

MEDICAL LIMITED CHURCH 10025-101 St, 420-1757

MYER HOROWITZ THEATRE SUB, U of A Campus, 451-8000

NEWCASTLE PUB AND GRILL 6108-90 Ave, 490-

1999

NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE 10081 Jasper Ave, 413-4578

NEW CITY SUBURBS 10081 Jasper Ave, down-stairs, 413-4578

O'BYRNE'S 10616-82 Ave, 414-6766

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Nomadic singer/songwriter Joel Kroeker displays his flair for *Melodrama*

By DAVE JOHNSTON

Even though Joel Kroeker spent a scant three years in Edmonton, the singer/songwriter says the city had a profound impact on him. "Edmonton has a really great singer/songwriter scene, and I plugged into that pretty quick when I was there," Kroeker says over the phone from his family home in Winnipeg. "That has a big effect on the kind of music that was possible for me, and that kind of music was being accepted. I met a lot of great musicians in Edmonton who were doing similar stuff."

Kroeker landed in Edmonton to study ethnomusicology and popular music at the University of Alberta, writing his thesis on western Canadian singer/songwriters making the jump from amateur to professional status, a leap he was trying to make himself. "There was a strange, circuitous route to what I was doing," he explains.

That route started in Winnipeg,

where Kroeker was born to a musically inclined family. As a child, Kroeker hopped around America with his family—California, Chicago, Kansas—before winding up back in Winnipeg. Kroeker picked up his first guitar while in high school and went on to study composition and guitar performance at the University of Manitoba. But it wasn't until he was studying at the U of A that Kroeker began experimenting with different

PREVIEW FOLK

instruments, playing with Indian ensembles and Celtic bands, and managing to release a successful indie album, *Naïve Bohemian*, in 1999. When he decided to head out to Vancouver after finishing his master's degree to try his hand at the professional music industry, Kroeker quickly realized what he had left behind.

"Vancouver doesn't have a great music scene, not for what I do," he says. "I think it might have had one, but not right now. There's not a lot of venues there, and for what I do, there's probably more venues in Edmonton. I was looking for a bigger scene, a more international scene. It was either going to be Toronto or Vancouver. One of the big reasons for Vancouver, though—and this is

going to sound terribly shallow—but I love the ocean. I couldn't stand another Winnipeg winter."

THE BUZZ AROUND KROEKER, however, demanded he turn around and play the game in Toronto. After countless workshops, lunches and long discussions, Kroeker inked a deal with True North Records last year, and recorded his first album the poetic and sonically eclectic *Melodrama*, with Great Big Sea producer Danny Greenspoon. "I was very happy to get Danny," Kroeker says. "He's worked with a lot of different artists, and he knows how to get the best sound out of anybody."

Greenspoon took a list of artists from Kroeker and helped assemble the players who would shape *Melodrama*—guitarist Kevin Breit, keyboardist Gary Breit, drummer Gary Craig and bassist George Koller. "We got just about everyone I wanted," Kroeker says.

One surprise was Randy Bachman, who contributes his guitar to "With Me" and called Kroeker "a modern pop version of Lenny Breau." The young player returned the compliment when he added his own guitar phrasings and vocals to a version of Johnny Cash's "I Walk the Line" that will appear on Bachman's upcoming jazz album, simply called *Jazz Thing*.

"As soon as [Bachman] gets a guitar in his hands, he's like a teenager," Kroeker says of the BTO legend. "Nothing is impossible in his mind, there's no limitation. He's been playing for 50 years and he's still learning stuff. I was playing on *Jazz Thing* and I was just warming up, playing this little thing, when he comes running out of the control room, asking, 'What did you just play?' He'd grab his guitar, noodling around, trying to figure it out. I just thought, 'Holy cow, he's still learning, after all these years.' You'd think his mind would be sort of full by now, but he has that Zen concept of beginner's mind, and that's one of the reasons he's so excited to be working with people. He's still able to learn." ☉

JOEL KROEKER

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root down

By JENNY FENIAK

Busy intersection

Division and Wellesley (CD Release) • With the Fembots and Sekiden • Sidetrack Café • Fri, Apr 9 He's just 23, but Division and Wellesley's Jeff Wickstrom's been playing guitar for nearly a decade and even though collaborating with band projects always intrigued him, there was always something standing in his way.

"Getting a band together—I don't think people realize it, but it's a lot of work," says Wickstrom during a brief break from his studies at Grant MacEwan College. "It's very difficult, just between not being able to find the right musicians at the time or having the right musicians but not having the right commitment level or having both of those things but not being able to agree on a style to play. You know, it's always been one of those three things kind of holding me back from doing anything. And I guess a year and a half ago when I started stuff, I just said, 'Well, alright—if I want to ever do anything, I think I'm just going to have to do it myself.' So it was kind of born out of necessity, but I've ended up really enjoying it."

After compiling the best of the best of his thoughtful, country-tinged tunes, Wickstrom set up an old analog four-track recording device at home and, one instrument at a time, put together *save me, daylight savings*. He compares the process to making a good mixtape: laying down and organizing the sounds was rather simple, but when it came time to master the album he turned to the talents of Nik Kozub. "I do like a little bit of tape hiss in there," Wickstrom says, "just 'cause it gives it a warmer, more intimate feel somehow. But there is definitely some noisy stuff—it's not nice, it's just noisy—that [Kozub] was able to get out."

Borrowing the name from a Spokane intersection frequently mentioned on American TV newscasts, Wickstrom chose to record as Division and Wellesley to allow room for future evolution and expansion with other artists. Even though he recorded *save me, daylight savings* entirely by himself, for instance, Wickstrom has recruited Jason Troock and Nick Johnson for his CD release show. "Hopefully," he says, "as often as possible from now on, I'm going to be playing with [those] guys and that kind of allows me to get the sound live as close as possible to the record."

Any Majeau Muse will tell you

Melissa Majeau and the Muse • With Elke Robitaille • Seedy's (Sat, Apr 10) • Sidetrack Café (Waynefest fundraiser, Fri, Apr 15) Ever since she was a little girl,

Melissa Majeau has had two constants in her life: massage and music. "Basically," says Majeau, who's now a massage therapist as well as a talented songwriter, "the parallel I draw between the two is that it's just taking people to an awesome place—a beautiful, positive place whether it be through touch or through music. They both kind of reach people on the same levels and offer some healing."

After moving to Edmonton from Morinville six years ago, Majeau began running the gauntlet of open stages and coffee shops with her sensual songs about love and living. She met Marc Jenkins of the band Nonfiction while they were both performing in Whitehorse, an encounter that laid the groundwork for the Muse, which now includes Brian Horwitz and Travis Shore. It was Jenkins, also a local producer at Nebali Studio, who convinced Majeau to hold off her recording until everything was solidly in place.

And even after she started recording her debut CD *Glow* in August 2002, it still took Majeau an entire year to find just the right players to work with. "As we started recording the songs, 'we would hear different things coming into the songs and think of friends that we knew that we wanted to have involved and just kind of make it a pot luck of sound,'" says Majeau, who compares the recording process to making a layer cake, beginning with her vocals and guitar. "We handed that off to about a dozen musicians we knew and picked songs for each one of



them. Then they'd hear the songs in very basic stylings and would write their own parts."

Majeau was able to round up local artists such as pianist Beth Schuld, John "Woody" Woroschuk and Alex Murdoch, who, after signing a record deal with Indica/Aquarius last year, now goes by his given first name, James. Released last August, *Glow* has received regular airplay on both CJSR and CKUA, but once the festival season is through, Majeau plans to get herself and the Muse back in the studio where they'll while away the coldest days and emerge next spring, undoubtedly with something new and beautiful. ☐

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The Junos busted out all over

Bouquets for Sam Roberts, brickbats for Paul Martin in our Juno recap

By DAVE JOHNSTON

The glow isn't as strong in Edmonton now, but for a brief time the Junos lit up our provincial capital and made life around this old berg feel a bit more glamorous. Limos shot up and down our major streets, well-heeled business types rubbed elbows with hirsute rockers and the clubs were rammed full of musicians and fans alike. Oh yes, we glowed, if only for three days.

Mind you, it wasn't a complete dream, these Junos. While Sunday's award ceremony looked stunning and was filled with remarkable performances—like Nelly Furtado's rendition of "Powerless" with the aboriginal group Whitefish Jr.—it was remarkably tepid. But the much ballyhooed "nude" Alanis Morissette segment (in which the singer/songwriter stripped down to a flesh-coloured bodysuit, complete with nipples and sagging pubic hair to comment on U.S. censorship) was

pretty funny. As were the pyrotechnics from Nickelback, thus securing our reputation in the East for being the sort who like to blow stuff up.

And good for Sam Roberts. What an amazing week he had. On Wednesday, he inaugurated Edmonton's latest live music venue, the Starlite Room, with a private invite-only concert. On Friday, he valiantly tried to keep the puck in the NHL veterans'

RECAP JUNOS

zone at the Juno Cup, despite a tepid turnout. On Saturday, he made women swoon at the Fan Fare autograph cattle call. Then Sunday night found the wee Montrealer taking everyone by surprise, cleaning up in all three categories he was nominated for—Artist, Album and Rock Album of the Year. "This was very unexpected and very, very welcome," he told the throngs at Rexall Place that night, and the millions watching at home. "Thank you very much."

HONOURING LEGENDARY industry figure Walt Grealis, the creator of the now-defunct *RPM* magazine and Juno precursor the Gold Leaf Awards, with an award of his own was a nice gesture, as was inviting Alice Cooper to

wax about producer Bob Ezrin. Although his speech weighed heavily on the value of musical education—an important topic, to say the least—viewers were spared the controversial language from the address he gave at the Saturday night private gala.

Now, this is the guy who brought us Alice Cooper, Pink Floyd's *The Wall*, Kiss' *Destroyer*. He knows what's going on. He's seen it all before. Which he reminded a few thousand industry wags who were still recoiling from Wednesday's headlines about music downloading being considered a legal activity under current copyright law. He brought up the issue of home taping, which the industry wrung their hands over in the late '70s, while also reminding them that a good portion of music being pro-

duced at the time wasn't worth the vinyl it was being pressed on. Then came CDs and three amazing albums—the Eagles' *Greatest Hits*, *The Wall* and Michael Jackson's *Thriller*—to reignite the industry.

And this is the crossroads that the industry faces once more. "I'm not scared," Ezrin said, apparently deviating from the TelePrompTer script. "I'm excited, I'm energized. I'm a little confused, but I have faith. We must disturb the status quo!"

THEN PRIME MINISTER Paul Martin turned up at Rush the Vote, convincing young people to exercise their democratic right, then promised the industry that his government will make copyright law tougher on downloading. Note to the PM's office:

the largest contingency of downloaders are teenagers, and if motivated, they could muster a few hundred thousand votes, if not more.

At least JunoFest was a resounding success, as thousands of people crammed venues around the city to see some of the best Canadian music around. The volunteers running the doors might have been overzealous at a few locations—denying entry to not only media covering the event but some of the talent who where supposed to be onstage in a few minutes—but when you've got a lineup down the block to see the Dears destroy a place like New City, I suppose your nerves could get frayed. It's a crime that the Dears didn't win, either. Here's hoping Winnipeg is luckier for them next year. ●

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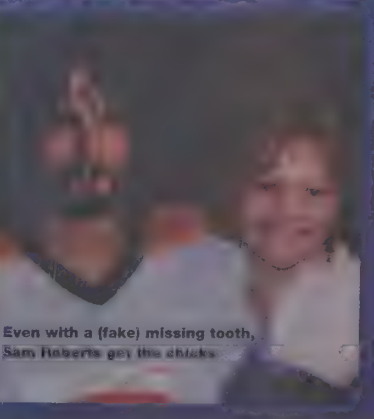
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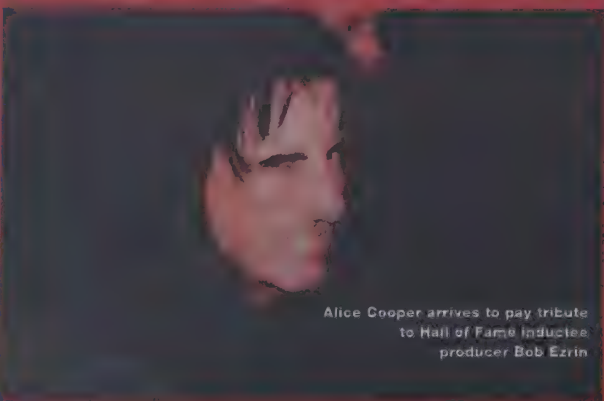
Even with a (fake) missing tooth,
Sam Roberts gets the chicks



Buck 65,
winner of
Alternative Album
of the Year



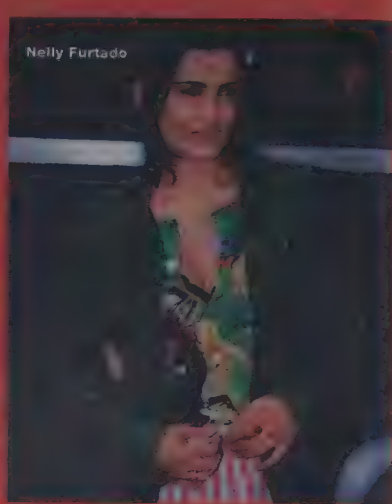
New Group of the Year
Billy Talent



Alice Cooper arrives to pay tribute
to Hall of Fame inductee
producer Bob Ezrin



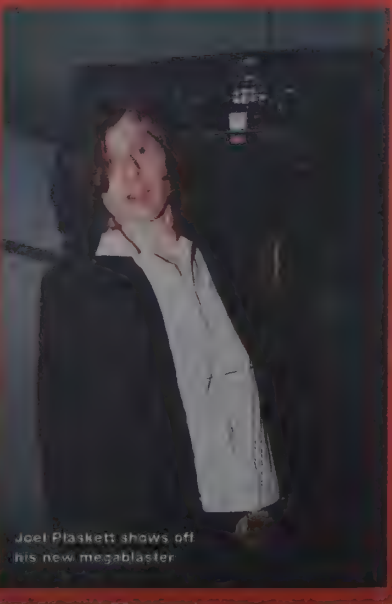
The Dears



Nelly Furtado



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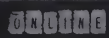
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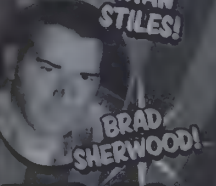
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NEW SOUNDS

MODEST MOUSE
GOOD NEWS FOR PEOPLE WHO LOVE BAD NEWS
(EPIC)

There's an excellent chance that with "Float On," off their new disc *Good News for People Who Love Bad News*, Modest Mouse has created a song that might become an embarrassingly huge anthem. It's got everything going for it: some appealing antisocial humour in the first verse ("I backed my car into a cop car the other day/Well he just drove off, sometimes life's OK"), an easygoing melody laid effectively atop some anxious drumming from Benjamin Weikel, and a cryptic yet undeniably rousing climax in which frontman Isaac Brock reassures everyone within the sound of his voice that "Even if things get heavy, we'll all float on." It's like an indie-rock rewrite of "Don't Worry, Be Happy," and I bet it's only a matter of time before you start hearing it in TV commercials and movie trailers.

I've seen a lot of chatter in the Internet blogosphere already criticizing *Good News* as a mainstream-courting sellout, but I think it's just a really strong collection of songs—and it's too bad it's so easy to mistake one for the other. "Bury Me With It" is a perfect screama-long mix of angst and a sense of humour, "Satin in a Coffin" shows off Brock's knack for weaving together clever rhymes and intricate syntax and "The Good Times Are Killing Me" closes the disc with a vivid evocation of one man slowly but raucously descending into alcoholism and drug

abuse. ("Have one, have twenty 'one more's and oh it does not relent.")

Some of Brock's lyrics could use some tuning-up when it comes to meter—"The World at Large" is full of moments where Brock must awkwardly cram one or two extra syllables into a line, and on "Bukowski," he's forced to pronounce the author's name with the accent on the first and third syllables instead of the second. But when it comes to one-syllable words, Brock's an absolute poet, from the line about "Kick-butt buzz-cut dickheads who didn't like what I said" on "The Good Times" to his vow on "Black Cadillacs" that he's "done, done, done with all the fuck, fuck, fucking around." I believe him. ★★★★★ —PAUL MATWYCHUK

BOB SINCLAIR AND MARTIN SLOVEIG
AFRICANISM II
(FUSION III)

The *Africanism* series returns with French house producer Bob Sinclair and another French DJ—in this case, Martin Solveig—exploring and incorporating bass-heavy Afro, West Indian and Latin sounds into a smooth-flowing mix. Each DJ gets a whole CD to themselves to play out their selection of tracks from artists such as DJ Gregory, Liquid People and Julien Jabre, all drawing upon gritty drum patterns and modern electro beats.

There's a little more variety on Solveig's watch than the disco-heavy Sinclair disc. While there are some breaks from this bouncing beat sound (such as Matt Samo's "Call It Jungle

Jazz"), for the most part it feels aimed at moving feet rather than getting heads to nod. Not that this is bad—after all, the tracks highlight how amenable the Afro and Latin sounds are to the dancefloor. ★★★★★ —JAMES ELFORD

BEN SOWTON AND VINCENT KWOK
BARGROOVES FROSTED
(SEAMLESS)

Call it aesthetic completeness or a packrat mentality, but music lovers have an obsession with having a complete set of anything. Not only will the very classily designed *Bargrooves* series of deep house CDs look good on a hipster's shelf, but you'll never question why you keep them around. *Bargrooves Frosted* is no exception.

Much of the credit must go to Ben Sowton. Always taking first disc DJ duty, Sowton knows his stuff—the *Bargrooves* series isn't on a label called "Seamless" for nothing. His late-night ride coasts through numbers by Soul Providers, Greens Keepers, Halo, Alan Barratt, Miguel Migs and more. Another superb Sowton selection also shows up on Disc Two with San Fran's Vincent Kwok taking over on the mix. Disc Two's selections by DJ Gregory, Joey Negro, Full Intention, Easydylcs and Kwok's own "Love Is the Answer" with D'Layna are equally deep and satisfying. The *Bargrooves* series is approaching 10 solid releases and it's about the best-sounding set of book-ends you're likely to own. ★★★★★ —YURI WUENSCH

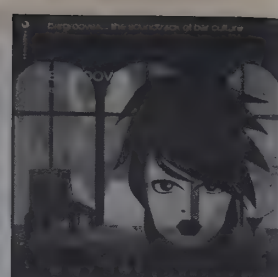
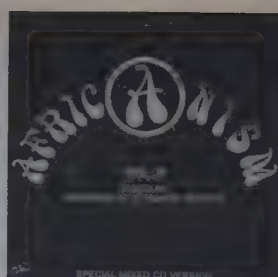
CHROMEO
SHE'S IN CONTROL
(VICE/TURBO)

So you think you're pretty hip, don't ya? You with your '80s mix compilations and that kitschy *He-Man* lunchbox you nabbed from Value Village. And then there was the *Miami Vice*-inspired loungewear you rocked on New Year's Eve last year. Yeah, nice one. Well guess what, bub: you might think you're hot shit, but after you listen to the new Chromeo record, I think you're gonna want to creep on back to the little indie-infested hole from whence you came and hang your head in shame.

Not only is Chromeo way fucking cooler than you'll ever be, but they've got the balls to rip off Hall and Oates, drop sax solos right into the middle of electrofunk workouts and pay homage to "Eye of the Tiger" all in the space of one album. Yeah, that's right. "Eye of the Tiger." Like their Franco-freak brethren in Phoenix and Daft Punk, these Montrealers aren't joking, either. I just wish I owned a black Trans Am so I could drive around with the top down and my shirt off blasting this shit; I'd get so-o-o-o many chicks. Buy multiple copies and send them to your friends—they'll freak. ★★★★★ —JERED STUFFCO

MARKEUS SCHULZ
COLDHARBOR SESSIONS 2004
(ARMADA)

I'll cop to it: I once sported big orange pants, floppy hats, stupid-looking sun-



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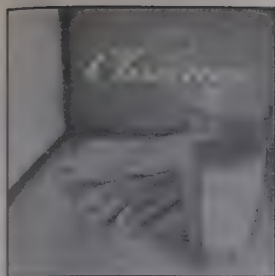
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top 10 sellers

01. misery is a butterfly blonde redhead
02. infini heart chad van gaalen
03. your blues destroyer
04. venice fennesh
05. fabulous muscles xlu xlu

06. bows & arrows walkmen
07. desperate youth... tv on the radio
08. madvillian madvillian
09. no hope but mt. hope fractal pattern
10. they were wrong... liars



glasses and pranced about like a merry old ass to the blissful sibilance of trance. Over time, I matured and acquired an affection for house music. In other words, I became less of a cracked-out E-tard and more of an alcoholic. Somehow, trance became uncool. Lately, though, it's sounding inspired again—fewer towering peaks and plummeting valleys, more consistent arcs and nice builds, on the part of producers as well as DJs.

That return to trance roots is certainly heard on Markus Schulz's latest. Schulz's fingerprints are all over this double-CD compilation with his remixes of tracks by Oceanlab, Mark Otten, Airwave, Whirlpool, Andain, George Hales and Schulz and Elevation's own "Somewhere." This mix, as well as many of the tunes it contains (such as Pinkbox Special's "Simple," Mind's "Afterlife" and Pete Martin's "Perfect Wave") are released on trance impresario Armin Van Buuren's Armada imprint. Good on him too for rescuing the sound from its sometimes embar-

assing tendencies. *Coldharbour Sessions 2004* is right hot stuff. ★★★★★ —YURI WUENSCH

FUNK D'VOID VOLUME FREAK (SOMA/FUSION III)

Lars Sandberg's last crack at dominating the sets of techno DJs was "Diabla," which ended up becoming a monster hit with jocks from all walks, from house to trance. The track's energy and spirit were inescapable and seductive, and attracted remixes from the Hacker and Kevin Saunderson. It also sent Sandberg away from Scotland to find a new home in sexy Barcelona, which is how we find a reinvented, almost harder version of "Diabla" on *Volume Freak*.

Clearly influenced by his sunnier environments, Sandberg's definition of techno is no less fierce, but the energy has been shifted toward a more uplifting end, hence the opening track, "Emotional Content."

House invades the mix on tracks like "Can't Get Enough of a Bad Thing" (featuring vocals by LFO's Mark Bell) and "Way Up High," but it might be a little too handbag for diehard techno types looking for some hard-edged electronic soul. Still, you can't fault a guy who can kick out an elastic bassline like the one on "All That Matters." A late-night groove session, that's what this one's all about. ★★★★★ —DAVE JOHNSTON

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QUICK SPINS

BY WHITEY AND TR. PLAYER

Play Don't Stop the Music (Columbia)

Okay, okay, *someone* has to fill the Spice Girls void, and so Play has come along to cram youthful aural orifices full of positivity. It's slick kids' pop music designed to Sell! Sell! Sell! and Sell! Sell! Sell! and hopefully zip past the lurking critical hyenas with its long, low-rise-adorned gazelle legs. The inclusion of a laughably naive version of "Hard Knock Life" is a mistake, though. The only time these suburban princesses have had "empty bellies" is after they've barfed up their mall-bought Atkins wraps—an ironic thought, since this album induces vomiting better than a finger in the throat.

The State of Samuel Mutiny on Mercury (Humblebee)

This inaugural Humblebee release somehow flew under our radar a few months back (during my marker-sniffing bender), but a fresh copy, fresh air and a fresh listen reveals a wonderful, modest pop record. The comely Swede delivers a stripped-down batch of acoustic gems that betray a '60s pop sensibility. But it's Samuel's soaring, quirky vocals (reminiscent of Wayne Coyne or Sean Lennon with an endearing amount of warble) that really give these songs heart. There's a campfire singsonginess and rough-around-the-edges feel that adds further charm to an already charming album.

The Nanobot Auxiliary Ballet Tylenol and Adda: The Deadly Ballerina (Ta Da)

Who better to write engaging, glitchy, bizarre robot rock than actual robots? Montreal-based automatons WhiteHot-Funkbot, PushButtonMaster and Chillbot are obviously programmed to shake human asses and blow fragile, delicious human minds like so much overloaded circuitry. The bleeps and bloops can get a little obtuse but if you factor in WhiteHot-Funkbot's Patti Schmidt/Brave New Waves sub-routine, it all seems so logical.

David Bisbal Buleria (Vale)

If open-shirted Latin hunks with Shirley Temple ringlets playing Ricky Martin meets the Gipsy Kings modern cheese appeals to you, then you're going to gleefully *cagaron sus pantalones* over Mr. Bisbal. It shouldn't be long until El Fomaggio peddles his pap in English for all you Anglo-only sheep.

The Vells The Runaway Found (Rough Trade)

At first *The Runaway Found* seems like jangly, symphonic pop, but after a few tracks Finn Andrew's precious British whining became too much for me to bear, to the point where I was forced to prematurely eject-ulate this CD from the player. It happens to everyone occasionally, I'm told.

Various Artists Livin' Lovin' Losin': Songs of the Louvin Brothers (Universal South)

Fifteen classics from way back when whorin' and cocaine-in' were respectable country music pastimes, not that the gospel-lovin' Louvins were ones to partake. By keeping the Superhats to a bare minimum, the... uh... regular hats have made this admirable nod to the duo a delightful old-timey listen.

Various Artists Back to Mine: Death in Vegas (DMC)

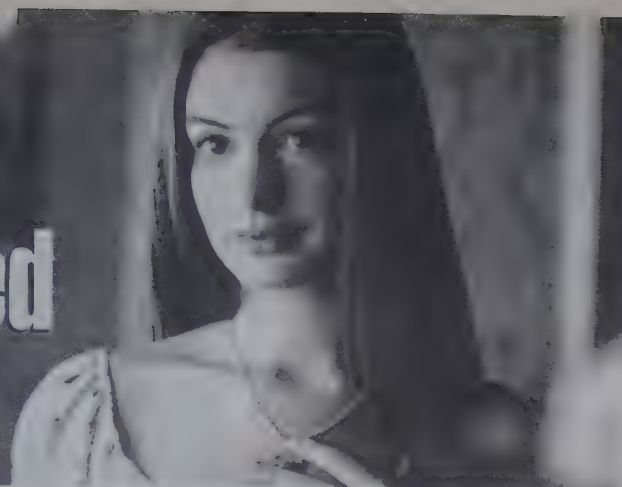
Who doesn't love a mixtape? Even if you could care less what makes Death in Vegas tick, you can't deny that this is a great, obtuse collection of songs. Nowhere else but on a celebrity mix like this will you find such disparate acts as the Upsetters, Songs: Ohia, Joy Division and the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band sandwiched together. The closer track, "Donna" by MMM, is a jaw-dropping electro cut that easily justifies picking this up.

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FILM

Obeyed in full



A girl rebels against the "gift of obedience" in surprisingly fun *Ella Enchanted*

BY DARREN ZENKO

About 10-odd minutes into *Ella Enchanted* the only things keeping me in my seat were professional responsibility and a sort of morbid curiosity regarding exactly how bad the experience was going to be. And I think the latter was probably stronger—there was nobody else at the

screening, so it would have been real easy to get away with making a run for it and "reviewing from the bar" as ye olde-time rock critics would say. I'm glad I decided to stick around; once things got rolling, *Ella Enchanted* turned out to be an okay little movie.

The premise is pretty simple: in a magical, parodic fairytale land—in which the Brothers Grimm have combined with *Mad* magazine to create a sort of Terry Pratchett Lite (if such a thing can be conceived)—a newborn girl is given the "gift" of obedience by a meddling fairy godmother. Ella (Anne Hathaway) is cursed to obey any and all direct commands put to her, in literal fash-

ion. So you can imagine the trouble that comes around when evil stepmom Dame Olga (Joanna Lumley) and her two horrid daughters enter the picture, a picture complicated by the introduction of dashing Prince Charmont, of whose fan club the elder evil stepsister is the president.

Ella Enchanted is very, very lightly



satirical in tone—there's a shopping mall complete with wooden escalators cranked by slaves, couples register their weddings at Crockery Barn; girls subscribe to *Medieval Teen*—all of

which is charming enough. But the film wants to go deeper; the script sets up a background where, by the command of Charmont's evil uncle (Cary Elwes), all non-human species (elves, giants and ogres) have been banished to racial ghettos, laws have been passed governing what professions they can enter and forced work camps dot the lush countryside. I didn't expect a soul-crushing dark fairytale in the line of Swanwick's *Iron Dragon's Daughter* or Donaldson's *Chronicle of Thomas Covenant*, but *Ella Enchanted* seems afraid (rightly) of its own social ideas, and it's a disappointment to see these potentially deep racial/political themes so lightly happily-ever-aftered.

But I suppose it's a movie for kids, after all, and a decent one—though why you'd treat a child to *Ella Enchanted* when *The Princess Bride* (or, hell, even *Labyrinth*) is readily available is beyond me—and as lightweight as it is, it surprised me with its maturity. By which I mean, it took 40 full minutes of screen time for an ogre to receive the film's first, and, I believe only, shot to the nuts, and there's only one fart joke. The romance between Ella and Prince Char is actually quite touching, too. It's storybook, yeah, but the complications arising from Ella's curse add unexpectedly affecting dimensions of humour and horror.

CREDIT GOES to Hathaway for making a lot of that happen. She's young and quite whitebread, but she's a game actress who puts everything into her scenes. It would have been

easy to walk through the role of eternally-obedient Ella like robo-girl Vicki from *Small Wonder*, mechanically obeying every command as an automaton. But Hathaway's Ella struggles and fights... and she's the best cryer I've seen onscreen in ages! When physical comedy is called for, she's right there with that too, and when she's commanded to "put more soul" into the song she's been commanded to sing... well, it's pretty hot. I think Ms. Hathaway will make a fine grown-up actress, if she doesn't fall into a pretty-face rut.

Ella Enchanted has been compared to *Shrek*, and I don't think it suffers from the comparison—*Shrek* is way overrated. *Ella's* a nice little afternoon matinee with the kids, without the weird cruel streak that ran through *Shrek*, and it just happens to feature a bunch of ninja warriors who show up for the final battle. But why not—yes, I'm going to ring this bell again—save the cost of admission, pop, popcorn, gas and parking and, in the comfort of your own living room, introduce a new generation to the super-awesome wit and wonder of *The Princess Bride*? Or even, again, *Labyrinth*; I hear they've digitally edited David Bowie's package so as not to frighten the children. ☺

ELLA ENCHANTED

Directed by Tommy O'Haver • Written by Karen McCullah Lutz and Kirsten Smith • Starring Anne Hathaway, Joanna Lumley, Hugh Dancy, Cary Elwes and—oh my god!—the voice of Steve "Alan Partridge" Cogan! • Opens Fri, Apr 9



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Shadows and Fog

Robert S. McNamara teaches the lessons of history in brilliant *Fog of War*

By JOSEF BRAUN

After exploring some of the more unsettling, intricate and subterranean manners in which blame and guilt can be masked and evaded in *The Thin Blue Line* and *Mr. Death*, U.S. documentary filmmaker Errol Morris hit upon the opportunity to orchestrate perhaps the greatest of all his moral-sociological filmic essays when he read former U.S. Secretary of Defence Robert McNamara's *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam*. What Morris saw in that book—something few critics were able to see—was that McNamara was taking an unprecedented stance among U.S. politicians of his pivotal era: despite his inherent personal contradictions and calculating coolness, he was willing to reflect, critically and publicly, on at least some of the most troubling and persistent questions surrounding Vietnam and the Cold War.

Morris contacted the now 86-year-old McNamara, got him to agree to place himself alone in a room with Morris's disembodied interview camera, and talk for about 20 hours. The resulting 95-minute film, *The Fog of War* (subtitled *Eleven Lessons From*

the Life of Robert McNamara), doesn't solve the riddles of McNamara's enigmatic character, it doesn't give him enough rope to hang himself (McNamara's been doing that just fine on his own for some years), it doesn't absolve him and it doesn't allow him to offer some extended *mea culpa*. The *Fog of War* is a remarkable film in that, given the strange transparency of its extremely articulate (albeit slippery) old subject, it provides selective but revealing access into the machinations behind some of the most terrible events in recent world history.

REVIEW DOCUMENTARY

And its chilling relevance to the actions of the current U.S. administration is undeniable, which is why Morris rightfully chose to avoid including McNamara's direct comments on them.

The film's "lessons," which lend a semblance of structure to the film, are abstracted from McNamara's musings: Empathize With Your Enemy. Rationality Will Not Save Us. Believing and Seeing Are Both Often Wrong. McNamara, eerily more alert and astute than many men half his age, expounds on these themes through autobiographical anecdotes. He talks about the contrasting policies of Presidents Kennedy and Johnson toward Vietnam, the Cuban Missile Crisis, his career calculating loss, boosting sales and innovating the use of seatbelts for the Ford Motor Company and his intelligence

work under trigger-happy Air Force general Curtis LeMay, who he helped plan the firebombing of 100,000 civilians in Tokyo during World War II, a grand feat of overkill that should have foreshadowed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. "If we had lost the war," LeMay once told him, "we would have been tried as war criminals." But *The Fog of War* is not only about the mist that distorts ethical decision-making in times of killing and conquest (though this is McNamara's in defence reading of the phrase), it's also about the fog that separates most of us from both the battlefield and history and preserves our moral judgments in either direction.

THERE'S A TERRIFIC QUOTE Morris keeps handy when defending his choice to shape *The Fog of War* into a film that's only explicitly about the past, and I think it's worth repeating. Morris says: "Santayana is well known for saying those that are unfamiliar with history are condemned to repeat it. He is less known for a far more interesting quote: 'History is wrong, and always has to be rewritten.'" The commentary in *The Fog of War* comes almost exclusively from McNamara; aside from a few questions lobbed at him

from Morris (who, puzzlingly, conducts his interviews from another room), McNamara is the sole voice we hear in the entire film. A shrewd choice. But Morris also composes his essay by including fascinating and illuminating bits of archival footage and repeating a few constructed images (such as dominoes toppling through a map of southeast Asia, to point out a weaker example), which accent McNamara's words along with the effectively grave and portentous Philip Glass score.

But Morris also uses very recently unearthed White House tapes to support McNamara's recollections, recordings in which we clearly hear McNamara advising both Kennedy and Johnson to pull out of Vietnam, something both are reluctant (if not completely unwilling) to do. So much for the image of Kennedy as the fallen martyr, a myth most recently perpetuated in the film

Thirteen Days, and McNamara as the "architect of the Vietnam War" upon whom masses can safely vilify and pile on the blame.

The Fog of War attempts to engage McNamara's moral sense and, in this regard, leaves us with so many questions—about responsibility, submission and denial, about murder, about empire—still hovering. Morris ends the film with a brief collage of some of McNamara's many demurals to answer certain questions. "I'd rather be damned if I don't," he explains. *The Fog of War* may deal with history, but its subject is very much alive and kicking, conflicted and wrestling with his abundant demons, moving forward and then retreating, still not quite able to navigate his way out of the fog. ☉

THE FOG OF WAR

Directed by Errol Morris • Featuring Robert S. McNamara • Opens Fri, Apr 9



Robert S. McNamara in *The Fog of War*

Duddy done right

The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz remains fresher than ever 30 years later

By JOSEF BRAUN

Thirty years after its initial release and more than half a century after the period in which it's set, *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, based on Mordecai Richler's novel, remains a canny window into a time when young men proved their social worth through blind ambition and enterprise. But this window also serves as a reflection for the viewer, illuminating the pathetic emptiness that inevitably follows greed and selfishness. The film also arrived in time to help break new ground in frank sexuality in mainstream movies and grant the casual moviegoer access to some of the inner workings of contemporary Jewish culture, neither soft-peddling the realities of religious repression nor dismissing the enduring power of Hebrew morality. As well, much of *The Apprenticeship of*

Duddy Kravitz and its go-for-broke lead performance by Richard Dreyfuss remains as hilarious as it is sad.

Set in a very different Montreal of the late 1940s (though in an area populated by several old Jewish families to this day), the Kravitz clan is divided into the smart, snobby and successful, like Duddy's textile manufacturer uncle, and the mediocre and stagnant, like Duddy's cabdriving widower dad (the always enjoyable Jack Warden). Richler's tale of

REVIEW COMEDY

crooked hijinks and petty dreams, which he himself adapted for the screen along with Lionel Chetwynd, is also one of a new generation making half-hearted attempts to break with tradition. Duddy was never destined for great things and he knows it, yet his defiance and spite far outweigh his humility and patience.

Duddy wants to get rich quick—the quicker, the more satisfying his gloating will be. He wants things, status. The most telling early scene has Duddy and his girlfriend Yvette (the lovely, Lauren Bacall-like Micheline

Lancôt, most recently seen in *The Barbarian Invasions*) visiting a beautiful secluded lake where she used to spend summers as a child. Yvette, against her better instincts, is falling in love with Duddy and wants to share something tender, nostalgic and romantic, but Duddy, thinking always of his grandfather's maxim that a man is no one until he owns land, simply cries out "I'm gonna buy this lake!"

ALTHOUGH DREYFUSS reportedly disliked his frenetic turn as the young Duddy (the story goes that he kept turning down *Jaws* until he realized his work in *Duddy* was so bad he better take anything just to save his career), it's a performance so charged with horny, frustrated, youthful energy that time has proven it to be not only memorable but influential—it's difficult not to see shades of Duddy in Ray Liotta's character in *GoodFellas*, for example. Dreyfuss certainly lays it on a bit thick at times, but his jumpiness is as appropriate to the character as it is to the film's structure, which benefits greatly from Richler's disregard for conventional exposition, quickly shifting from one event to another while loads of interim plot is



Richard Dreyfuss in *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*

left for us to work out easily enough.

Dreyfuss is matched not only by Lancôt and Warden, but by Denholm Elliott's delicious drunken communist filmmaker—his filming of a kid's bar mitzvah, complete with clips of blood-splattered naked breasts, glass-eating and Hitler, is one of *Duddy's* comic highlights—and Randy Quaid's naïve, epileptic Virgil. I love the starry-eyed way Quaid says "A job!" when Duddy swindles him into buying and driving a truck for him. That moment,

in which Virgil dreams of a vocation and Duddy dreams only of money, is perhaps the slyest manner in which Richler reveals what Duddy is really all about. ☉

THE APPRENTICESHIP OF DUDDY KRAVITZ

Directed by Ted Kotcheff • Written by Mordecai Richler and Lionel Chetwynd • Starring Richard Dreyfuss, Micheline Lancôt and Jack Warden • Zeidler Hall, The Citadel • Fri-Mon, Apr 9-12 (9pm) • Metro Cinema • 425-9211

Gasoline on the lens

Amiable *Gaz Bar Blues* doesn't exactly offer high-octane action

By STEPHEN NOTLEY

You wouldn't think you'd want to hang out all day at a quietly failing Quebec gas bar in 1989. There's not a lot of pop or zing or excitement to the daily outs and ins of life at the Champlain gas stop, run as it is by wifeless 55-year-old M. Brochu and his three sons Rejean, Guy and Alain, propped up by the handful of guys who spend their time

there sipping coffee since they've got nowhere else to go. High drama this is not, yet there are the details, the little moments here and there, the simple interactions between sons and father that slowly, slowly draw you in.

Gaz Bar Blues is one of those quiet character portrait films, thin on plot twists and surprises. M. Brochu, "The Boss," plugs away without complaint, routinely ripped off by his customers who lean on his good nature. His son Rejean takes more of an interest, confronting the occasional robber—"You wanna rob my dad, you gotta get by me first"—and earning sighing rebukes from his dad for putting himself in danger. Rejean, meanwhile, is frustrated by Guy, who blows off shifts to play harmonica at

blues bars and likes buying shitty cars that don't work. Eventually Rejean can't take it anymore and splits for freshly post-Wall Berlin, sending back letters and photographs of Wall-chipping Berliners, leaving 14-year-old Alain, not a bad kid though he's got the weird tic of con-

REVIEW DRAMA

tinually catching and pitching imaginary baseballs, to pick up the slack.

This isn't the kind of movie where a lot "happens," but it's got a rhythm, a tired, day-to-day homeliness that holds your attention just long enough to pass it onto the next scene. We see it in mustached mechanic Gaston

Savard, usually frowning, keeping an eye on things, not saying much but speaking the law when he does, catching a regular customer in the act of stealing from the safe and doling out some appropriate nonviolent that'll-teach-you punishment. We see it in the various losers who hang out at the Champlain, the 44-year-old newspaper-quoting virgin or the sloppy idiot who misquotes Elvis lyrics and picks pizza pieces off the ground to give to the blind guy. And we see it in the Boss as he shuffles through and around it all, hiding his encroaching Parkinson's disease, gently overseeing his tiny community of hangers-on, trying to do right by his sons who want out or don't care or are too young and imaginary-ball-

pitching to fully trust.

Gaz Bar Blues isn't rousing; indeed, if anything, it's a slow, soft decay. Just shy of two hours, it gets you looking at your watch and waiting to be released in the last few minutes. But at the same time there's a comforting familiarity about it that takes hold after a while, like an old couch or a hangout you've spent so many years at you don't even know why you go there anymore. If you're looking to go to the movies and just kinda watch the day go by, you could do worse.

GAZ BAR BLUES

Written and directed by Louis Bélanger • Starring Serge Thériault and Gilles Renaud • Zeidler Hall, The Citadel • Fri-Mon, Apr 9-12 (7pm) • Metro Cinema • 425-9212

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Divorce of a different colour

Splitsville comedy *The Awful Truth* kicks off EFS series of Hollywood classics

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

The *Awful Truth* is a romantic comedy in which the two lead characters agree to divorce each other within the film's first 10 minutes. But that sour start isn't what makes this 1937 film seem so modern—in fact, so-called “comedies of divorce” had been a popular Hollywood and Broadway genre for decades, and *The Awful Truth* itself was based on a 1921 stage hit by Arthur Richman that had been filmed twice already before the 1937 version came along.

But when Columbia Pictures acquired the property, studio chief Harry Cohn had the bright idea of handing it over to director Leo McCarey, whose films ranged from freewheeling comedies like the Marx Brothers' *Duck Soup* to unusual, low-key, humanist relationship movies like *Make Way for Tomorrow* and *Love Affair*. Both these strands of McCarey's style would unite memorably in *The Awful Truth*. The film began shooting with the script still incomplete, forcing McCarey to improvise memorable bits—like Cary Grant secretly tickling Irene Dunne's hand while a suitor reads her a love poem, or the clock with a mechanical man and woman whose actions comment on those of Grant and Dunne—right there, on the set. But for all this comic playfulness, McCarey makes sure that there are some real emotional stakes to the relationship between Grant and Dunne's characters. (McCarey, in fact, won the Oscar for his work on the film.)

MCCAREY'S EFFORTS are greatly aided by Grant's mischievous performance as jealous socialite Jerry Warner—just take a look at his masterful underplaying in the opening scene, where Jerry registers his

anger with his wife Lucy (who's just spent the night in an inn with her oily Eurotrash music teacher) with nothing more than a few well-placed grunts and muttered comments containing sarcasm so subtle it's nearly subliminal. He does some expert slapstick later in the film, falling over a chair and accidentally smashing an end table after blundering into his wife's music recital, and he also has a tender final reconciliation scene in which he asks Lucy to call off the divorce decree, promising to make things between them “the same, but different.” Grant even performs a hilarious musical number with Asta

(the adorable wire-haired terrier from the *Thin Man* movies)—he plays

stride piano and Asta barks along.

Surprisingly, the next-funniest performance in the movie is given by Ralph Bellamy, playing an early version of the role he'd play in *His Girl Friday*, as the guy Cary Grant doesn't want his wife to get remarried to. Here, Bellamy's “unsuitable suitor” is Oklahoma rancher Daniel Leeson, a beefy, aw-shucks mama's boy—the kind of guy who prides himself on what a fun, considerate guy he is even though he ignores how much Lucy hates being dragged onto the dancefloor with him, and neglects to stand up and defend her against his mother's insults. Bellamy makes Leeson into such a classic buffoon that after a certain point all he had to do was knock on Lucy's door and announce, “It's me! And my ma!” to get a laugh out of me.

The Awful Truth has its flaws—the part of Lucy could have used an actress with more sexual electricity than Irene Dunne, and there's an ugly snobbish streak in the scene where Lucy tries to sabotage Jerry's budding romance with an heiress by showing up at their house claiming to be Jerry's low-class sister Lola—but it's still a sparkling comedy and a strong kickoff to the Edmonton Film Society's spring series of Monday-night screenings of classic Hollywood comedies.

The real must-sees of the rest of the series are two rarely-exhibited films by Preston Sturges: his subver-

sive satire of military heroism *Hail the Conquering Hero* (May 17) and his underrated 1940 gem *Christmas in July* (June 14), about an office worker who mistakenly believes he's won the jackpot in a slogan contest sponsored by a coffee company. Both films display Sturges's flair for speedy, slangy dialogue and his belief that success can change into failure (and vice versa) literally overnight. *It Should Happen to You* (April 19) is only so-so, but it's worth catching if only because it stars Judy Holliday,

who made so few film appearances that each one is precious. And of course Frank Capra's *It Happened One Night* (June 7) remains one of the most enjoyable of all romantic comedies, not to mention a useful educational tool on the twin arts of hitchhiking and donut-dunking.

The rest of the schedule consists of three more Cary Grant pictures: *Monkey Business* (May 3), *That Touch of Mink* (May 10) and *Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House* (June 21), but these are lesser entries in

the Grant canon, stolid comedies with few traces of the sophisticated wit that makes *The Awful Truth* so memorable. After they're over, you don't feel like you've dated Cary Grant; you feel like you've married Ralph Bellamy. ☉

THE AWFUL TRUTH

Directed by Leo McCarey • Written by Viña Delmar • Starring Cary Grant, Irene Dunne and Ralph Bellamy • Provincial Museum Auditorium (102 Ave & 128 St) • Mon, Apr 12 (series continues most Mondays until June 21) • 439-5285

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FILM WEEKLY

NEW THIS WEEK

The Alamo (CO, FP) Dennis Quaid, Jason Patric and Billy Bob Thornton star in *The Rookie* director John Lee Hancock's historical epic about the famed 1836 siege in which a small cadre of less than 300 men made a doomed effort to defend a fort in San Antonio from the much larger Mexican army.

The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz (M) Richard Dreyfuss, Jack Warden and Denholm Elliott star in *First Blood* director Ted Kotcheff's 1974 adaptation of Mordecai Richler's classic novel about a young Montreal Jew and his determined efforts to make a success out of himself. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Fri-Mon, Apr 9-12 (9pm)*

The Awful Truth (EFS) Cary Grant, Irene Dunne and Ralph Bellamy star in *Duck Soup* director Leo McCarey's classic 1937 comedy about a husband and wife going through a divorce who jealously set out to sabotage each other's new romances. *Provincial Museum Auditorium (102 Ave & 128 St) Mon, Apr 12 (8pm)*

Ella Enchanted (CO, FP) Anne Hathaway, Hugh Dancy and Cary Elwes star in *Get Over It* director Tommy O'Haver's comic fantasy about a young woman's quest to lift the burdensome "gift of obedience" bestowed upon her by a well-meaning fairy. Based on the YA novel by Gail Caron Levine.

The Fog of War (P) *The Thin Blue Line* director Errol Morris's timely, Oscar-winning documentary, in which former U.S. Secretary of Defence Robert S. McNamara explains his controversial policies toward Cuba and Vietnam and offers his theories about modern warfare and foreign policy. Music by Philip Glass.

Gaz Bar Blues (M) Serge Thériault stars in director Louis Bélanger's slice-of-life comedy/drama about an aging gas-station proprietor struggling to keep his business afloat despite hold-ups, corporate competition and the onset of Parkinson's disease. In French with English subtitles. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Fri, Mon, Apr 9-12 (7pm)*

The Girl Next Door (CO, FP, L) Elisha Cuthbert, Emile Hirsch and Timothy Olyphant star in *The Animal* director Luke Greenfield's creepy romantic comedy about a high-school senior who falls in love with his gorgeous new next-door neighbour, only to learn that she's a former porn star.

Johnson Family Vacation (CO) Cedric the Entertainer, Vanessa Williams and Bow Wow star in director Christopher Erskine's comedy about a family enduring a mishap-plagued car trip halfway across the country to a reunion in Missouri.

Sexy Beast (M) Ben Kingsley and Ray Winstone star in director Jonathan Glazer's sunbaked 2000 crime film about a retired gangster whose serene life is shattered when a menacing former accomplice arrives at his Spanish villa demanding he take part in an upcoming bank heist. Showing with local director Ben Babchishin's short film *A Gun, a Cigar and a Bottle of Scotch*. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Thu, Apr 8 (7pm)*

The Whole Ten Yards (CO, FP) Bruce Willis, Matthew Perry, Natasha Henstridge, Amanda Peet and Kevin Pollak star in *Grumpier Old Men* director Howard Deutch's sequel to the 2000 comedy *The Whole Nine Yards*, in which domesticated hitman Jimmy the Tulip must come out of retirement to aid timid dentist Nicholas Oersangis when his wife is kidnapped by the Hungarian mob.

FIRST-RUN MOVIES

Agent Cody Banks 2: Destination London (FP) Frankie Muniz, Anthony Anderson and Hannah Spearritt star in *Twin Town* director Kevin Allen's sequel to the 2003 tween-targeted hit, in which a teenaged CIA agent travels to England for his latest undercover assignment.

The Corporation (GA) Directors Mark Achbar (*Manufacturing Consent*) and Jennifer Abbott's provocative documentary about the psychopathic, conscienceless inner workings of the corporate mind. Featuring interviews with Naomi Klein, Noam Chomsky and Michael Moore.

Dawn of the Dead (CO, FP, L) Sarah Polley, Ving Rhames and Mekhi Phifer star in director Zack Snyder's remake of George Romero's satirical 1978 horror movie about a small band of humans who barricade themselves in a massive shopping mall when the earth is taken over by a vast army of zombies.

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (CO, FP) Jim Carrey, Kate Winslet, Kirsten Dunst and Elijah Wood star in *Human Nature* director Michel Gondry's dark comedy about a man who learns his ex-girlfriend has undergone an experimental procedure to erase all her memories of their relationship and decides to get his memories wiped out as well. Screenplay by Charlie Kaufman.

50 First Dates (FP) Adam Sandler, Drew Barrymore, Sean Astin and Rob Schneider star in *Anger Management* director Peter Segal's romantic comedy about a veterinarian who attempts to have a relationship with a girl whose short-term memory loss means he has to get her to fall in love with him every single time they meet.

Hellboy (CO, FP, L) Ron Perlman, Selma Blair and John Hurt star in *Blade II* director Guillermo del Toro's big-screen adaptation of the popular comic book about a demon who is adopted by U.S. agents and raised as a force for good after being brought into our dimension as a result of a mystical Nazi experiment gone awry.

Hidalgo (CO, FP) Viggo Mortensen, Malcolm McDowell and Omar Sharif star in *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids* director Joe Johnston's exotic equestrian epic, set in Saudi Arabia in 1890, about an American Pony Express courier who travels to the desert to take part in a lucrative but dangerous and grueling horse race.

Home on the Range (CO, FP, L) The voices of Cuba Gooding Jr., Randy Quaid, Judi Dench, Steve Buscemi and Jennifer Tilly are featured in this animated Disney cartoon about a group of animals who band together to raise enough money to pay off the mortgage on the farm where they all live.

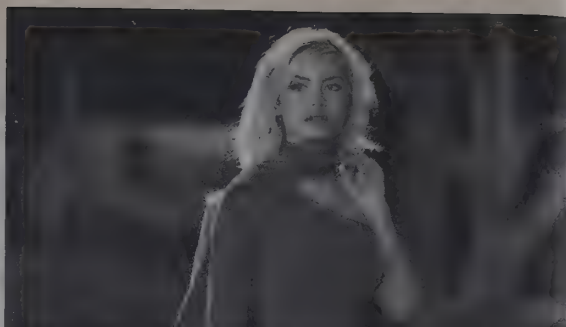
Jersey Girl (CO) Ben Affleck, Liv Uller, Rachel Castro and George Carlin star in *Chasing Amy* writer/director Kevin Smith's heartwarming comedy about a career-driven man who must re-evaluate his priorities when his wife dies, forcing him to raise his daughter alone.

The Ladykillers (CO, FP, L) Tom Hanks, Marlon Wayans, Irma P. Hall and J.K. Simmons star in *Raising Arizona* writer/directors Joel and Ethan Coen's remake of the classic 1955 comedy, about an eccentric criminal mastermind whose plan to rob a New Orleans riverboat is complicated by his meddling landlady, whose conveniently located basement is integral to his scheme.

The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (CO) Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen, Viggo Mortensen and Liv Uller star in the long-awaited concluding chapter of director Peter Jackson's epic film adaptation of J.R.R. Tolkien's trilogy of fantasy novels about a band of hobbits, trolls, elves, wizards and humans who embark on a quest to destroy an evil, all-powerful ring.

Mystic River (FP) Sean Penn, Kevin Bacon and Tim Robbins star in *Unforgiven* director Clint Eastwood's moody drama, set in working-class Boston, about three childhood friends whose traumatic memories of the past are revived when one, now a police detective, begins to suspect another of killing the third's daughter. Based on the novel by Dennis Lehane.

NASCAR 3D: The IMAX Experience (FP) Kiefer Sutherland and Jeff Gordon are featured in *Free Willy* director Simon Wincer's jumbo-screen documentary about the history of the NASCAR racing circuit and the cutting-edge technology that the sport's top drivers rely on to win competitions.



Anyone who's been watching 24 over the last three seasons has probably developed a grudging affection for the character played by Elisha Cuthbert, the simply dressed (though the mugshot that is Kim Bauer, seemingly incapable of walking two city blocks without getting kidnapped, or hiking 20 yards in the country without getting her ankle caught in a bear trap, or spending two hours with a boy without him losing a leg or getting exposed to a deadly virus, Kim is the personification of a tempered-blonde-American helplessness. When she's promoted this season (suddenly sporting a serious new hairdo and doing high-level computer hacking for the U.S. government, it seemed at once a deep violation of her character and yet a predictable by-product of 24's delirious, logic-free approach to plotting). Cuthbert's best last vehicle, *The Girl Next Door*, opens this week. If her character doesn't get kidnapped at least twice, we'll feel ripped off.

The Passion of the Christ (CO, FP) Jim Caviezel and Monica Bellucci star in *Braveheart* director Mel Gibson's ultra-controversial, blood-soaked Biblical epic depicting the final 12 hours in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. In Latin and Aramaic with English subtitles.

The Prince and Me (CO, FP) Julia Stiles, Luke Mably and Miranda Richardson star in *Rambling Rose* director Martha Coolidge's romantic comedy about a Wisconsin university student who falls in love with one of her classmates, not realizing he's actually a Danish prince posing as a commoner.

Scoby-Doo 2: Monsters Unleashed (CO, FP, L) Matthew Lillard, Sarah Michelle Gellar, Linda Cardellini and Freddie Prinze Jr. star in director Raja Gosnell's sequel to his 2002 hit, in which the Mystery, Inc. detective agency battles an evil scientist who has developed a machine that recreates the greatest foes from their past cases.

Secret Window (FP) Johnny Depp, John Turturro and Maria Bello star in *The Trigger Effect* writer/director David Koepp's psychological thriller about a newly divorced writer who is stalked at his remote cottage by a psychotic stranger who claims he stole a story idea from him. Based on the novella by Stephen King.

Seducing Dr. Lewis (P) Raymond Bouchard, David Boutin and Benoît Brière star in director Jean-François Pouliot's warm-hearted comedy about a group of locals who must convince a visiting doctor to become a permanent resident so that a lucrative new factory will be built in their tiny fishing vil-

lage. In French with English subtitles.

Starsky and Hutch (CO, FP) Ben Stiller, Owen Wilson, Vince Vaughn and Snoop Dogg star in *Old School* director Todd Phillips's irreverent film version of the 1970s TV cop show about a pair of mismatched policemen who fight crime with the aid of their souped-up Ford Torino and their omniscient street informer Hugh Bear.

Taking Lives (FP) Angelina Jolie, Ethan Hawke and Olivier Martinez star in *The Salton Sea* director D.J. Caruso's thriller about an FBI profiler on the trail of an elusive serial killer who assumes the lives and identities of each of his victims.

Walking Tall (CO, FP) The Rock, Johnny Knoxville and Neal McDonough star in *All About the Benjamins* director Kevin Bray's modernized re-imagining of the 1973 drive-in classic, in which an ex-member of the U.S. Army Special Forces makes it his mission to clean up his small hometown after a corrupt casino owner turns it into a drug-riddled cesspool.

LEGEND

CO: Cineplex Odeon, 444-5468
EFS: Edmonton Film Society, 439-5285
FP: Famous Players
GA: Garneau Theatre, 433-0728
L: Leduc Cinema, 986-2728
M: Metro Cinema, 425-9212
P: Princess Theatre, 433-0728

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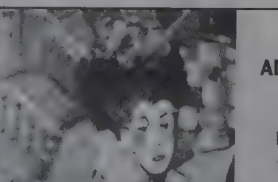
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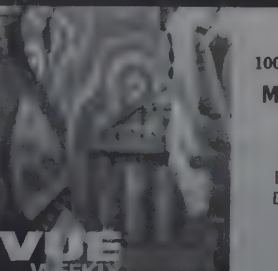
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Sophia PODRYHULA-SHAW,
James STOLEE, Tammy WOOLGAR

FILM LISTINGS

Showtimes for Friday APR 9 to Thursday, April 16

All showtimes are subject to change at any time. Please contact theatre for confirmation.

GARNEAU
8712-109 St. 439-0728

THE CORPORATION
Daily 6:45 9:30 Fr Sat Sun Mon 2:00
No show Apr. 15/7pm

PRINCESS
10010-109 St. 439-0728

SEDUCING DR. LEWIS
Daily 7:15 9:40 Fr Sat Sun Mon 2:00

THE FOG OF WAR
Mature theme. Daily 7:00 9:10 Fr Sat Sun Mon 2:30

METRO CINEMA
9826-101A Ave.
Cineplex Theatre 439-0728

GAZ BAR BLUES
Fr-Mon 7:00

THE APPRENTICESHIP OF DUDDY KRAWITZ
Some crude language. Fr-Mon 1:15

GRANDIN THEATRE
Grandin Mall, Sir Winston Churchill Ave.
St. Albert 439-0728

HELLBOY
Violence. Daily 1:00 3:30 7:00 9:30

ELLA ENCHANTED
Daily 1:10 3:30 5:45 9:00

SCOOBY-DOO 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED
Daily 12:30 3:20 4:20 7:10

THE LADYKILLERS
Coarse language. Daily 9:20

THE PRINCE AND ME
Daily 12:55 2:45 4:35 7:25 9:15

HOME ON THE RANGE
Daily 12:45 2:45 4:20 6:50 9:30

LEDUC CINEMAS
4702-50 Street 439-0728

HELLBOY
Violence. Daily 6:50 9:25 Fr Sat Sun Mon 1:10 3:30

SCOOBY-DOO 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED
Daily 7:10 Fr Sat Sun Mon 1:00 3:10

THE LADYKILLERS
Coarse language. Daily 9:45

HOME ON THE RANGE
Daily 7:00 Fr Sat Sun Mon 1:10 3:30

THE GIRL NEXT DOOR
Crude sexual content. Fr Sat Sun Mon 1:00 3:30

DAWN OF THE DEAD
Gory violence throughout. Daily 9:10

WETASKIWIN CINEMAS
1010-109 St. 439-0728

SCOOBY-DOO 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED
Daily 1:00 3:10

HELLBOY
Violence. Daily 6:50 9:20

HOME ON THE RANGE
Daily 1:10 3:30 7:00 9:45

THE PRINCE AND ME
Daily 1:05 3:25 7:05 9:25

CINEPLEX ODEON CINEMAS
10010-109 St. 439-0728

CINEMA GUIDE

CITY CENTRE
10200-102 Ave. 421-7020

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
English subtitles. Brutal and gory violence, disturbing content. Daily 12:40 3:40 6:40

STARSKY AND HUTCH
Daily 9:40

DAWN OF THE DEAD
Gory violence throughout. Daily 1:40 10:30

ETERNAL SUNSHINE OF THE SPOTLESS MIND
Coarse language. Fr-Tue 1:10 4:00 6:30 9:20

JERSEY GIRL
Daily 4:20 7:50

THE LADYKILLERS
Coarse language. Daily 1:00 4:10 7:20 10:10

HELLBOY
Violence. Daily 12:50 3:50 7:00 10:00

WALKING TALL
Violence. Daily 1:30 4:30 7:10 9:30

THE GIRL NEXT DOOR
Crude sexual content. No passes. Daily 1:20 4:40 7:30 10:15

THE ALAMO
Daily 12:30 3:30 6:50 9:50

THE WHOLE TEN YARDS
Daily 1:50 4:50 7:40 10:20

WEST MALL 8
8882-170 St. 444-1331

ALONG CAME POLLY
Crude content. Fr-Sun 4:40 7:30 Mon-Thurs 7:30

MASTERS AND COMMANDERS: THE FAR SIDE OF THE WORLD
Violence. Fr-Sun 2:30 6:55 9:15 Mon-Thurs 6:35 9:15

CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
Fr-Sun 2:10 4:30 7:10 9:35 Mon-Thurs 7:10 9:35

TWISTED
Violence, coarse language. Fr-Sun 2:00 9:40 Mon-Thurs 9:40

CALENDAR GIRLS
Nudity. Fr-Sun 4:20 8:50 Mon-Thurs 8:50

EUROTRIP
Crude sexual content. Fr-Sun 1:50 4:10 6:45 8:50 Mon-Thurs 6:45 8:50

MIRACLE
Fr-Sun 1:20 9:00 Mon-Thurs 9:00

MYSTIC RIVER
Coarse language. Fr-Sun 2:20 6:30 9:10 Mon-Thurs 6:30 9:10

SPARTAN
Violence, coarse language. Fr-Sun 1:30 3:50 7:20 9:30 Mon-Thurs 7:20 9:30

AGENT COO BANKS 2: DESTINATION LONDON
Fr-Sun 1:40 4:00 7:00 9:20 Mon-Thurs 7:00 9:20

CLAREVIEW
4211-109 Ave. 439-0728

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
English subtitles. Brutal and gory violence, disturbing content. Fr-Mon 1:00 4:00 7:15 Tue-Thurs 4:00 7:15

DAWN OF THE DEAD
Gory violence throughout. Daily 10:10

THE PRINCE AND ME
Fr-Mon 1:05 3:50 6:30 9:00 Tue-Thurs 3:50 6:30 9:00

JERSEY GIRL
Daily 9:50

SCOOBY-DOO 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED
Fr-Mon 12:50 3:30 5:20 7:40 Tue-Thurs 3:00 5:20 7:40

THE LADYKILLERS
Coarse language. Daily 9:20

HELLBOY
Violence. Fr-Mon 1:30 4:10 7:00 9:40 Tue-Thurs 4:10 7:00 9:40

HOME ON THE RANGE
Daily 12:30 3:10 5:10 7:20 Tue-Thurs 3:10 5:10 7:20

WALKING TALL
Violence. Fr-Mon 1:00 3:20 5:30 7:50 10:15 Tue-Thurs 3:20 5:30 7:50 10:15

THE GIRL NEXT DOOR
Crude sexual content. No passes. Fr-Mon 1:50 4:20 7:30 10:00 Tue-Thurs 4:20 7:30 10:00

ELLA ENCHANTED
No passes. Fr-Mon 1:40 4:30 7:10 9:30 Tue-Thurs 4:30 7:10 9:30

THE WHOLE TEN YARDS
Fr-Mon 1:20 3:45 6:50 9:10 Tue-Thurs 3:45 6:50 9:10

THE ALAMO
Fr-Mon 12:40 3:40 6:45 9:45 Tue-Thurs 3:40 6:45 9:45

SOUTH EDMONTON COMMON
10010-109 St. 439-0728

LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING
Violence, frightening scenes. Daily 8:15

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
English subtitles. Brutal and gory violence, disturbing content. Daily 12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00 9:20

HIDALGO
Daily 9:40

14A Violence. Fr-Wed 12:30 3:30 6:45 9:50 Thu 12:30 3:30 6:50 Stars and Stripes. Thu 10:00 am

14A **STARSKY AND HUTCH**
English subtitles. Brutal and gory violence, disturbing content. Daily 12:30 2:00 3:30 5:15 6:40 9:40

14A **SAVING PRIVATE RYAN**
Gory violence throughout. Daily 12:40 3:15 5:40 8:10 10:30

18A **JERSEY GIRL**
Daily 3:30 4:30 7:15 10:00

14A **THE LADYKILLERS**
Coarse language. Daily 12:50 3:50 7:00 9:30

14A **HELLBOY**
Violence. Daily 12:15 1:15 3:10 4:10 6:50 7:50 9:45 10:45

WALKING TALL
Violence. Daily 12:45 1:45 3:20 4:20 5:45 7:20 8:20 9:40 10:40

THE GIRL NEXT DOOR
Crude sexual content. No passes. Daily 12:10 2:50 5:20 8:00 10:45

14A **ELLA ENCHANTED**
No passes. Daily 1:10 3:45 6:40 9:15

THE WHOLE TEN YARDS
Daily 12:20 3:40 7:10 10:15

14A **THE WHOLE TEN YARDS**
Daily 1:40 4:40 7:30 10:10

JOHNSON FAMILY VACATION
Daily 2:00 4:50 7:40 10:15

13 GOING ON 30
Sneak preview. Sat 7:00

WEST MALL 6
8882-170 St. 444-1331

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
Frightening scenes. Fr-Sun 2:10 4:20 6:40 Mon-Thurs 6:40

THE LAST BANQUET
Gory scenes. Fr-Sun 2:50 6:30 9:30 Mon-Thurs 6:30 9:30

SCOOBY-DOO 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED
Coarse language, sexual content. Daily 8:50

WIN A DATE WITH TAD HAMILTON!
Fr-Sun 2:20 4:40 6:50 9:00 Mon-Thurs 6:50 9:00

YOU GOT SERVED
Fr-Sun 2:05 4:40 7:20 9:20 Mon-Thurs 7:20 9:20

BIG FISH
Not recommended for young children. Fr-Sun 2:00 4:30 7:10 9:40 Mon-Thurs 7:10 9:40

14A **CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN**
Fr-Sun 2:30 4:50 7:00 9:10 Mon-Thurs 7:00 9:10

14A **THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST**
English subtitles. Brutal and gory violence, disturbing content. Fr-Mon 12:05 3:30 7:05 Tue-Thurs 7:05

STARSKY AND HUTCH
Daily 9:50

HIDALGO
Violence. Daily 9:10

THE LADYKILLERS
Coarse language. Daily 10:00

SCOOBY-DOO 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED
Fr-Mon 12:00 2:15 4:40 7:00 Tue-Thurs 7:00

THE PRINCE AND ME
Fr-Mon 1:45 4:35 7:15 9:55 Tue-Thurs 7:15 9:55

WALKING TALL
Violence. Fr-Mon 1:00 3:20 7:00 9:35 Tue-Thurs 7:20 9:35

HELLBOY
Violence. Fr-Mon 12:35 4:00 6:55 9:40 Tue-Thurs 6:55 9:40

HOME ON THE RANGE
Fr-Mon 12:30 2:05 4:15 7:10 Tue-Thurs 7:10

THE WHOLE TEN YARDS
Fr-Mon 12:20 3:00 6:50 9:25 Tue-Thurs 6:50 9:25

THE GIRL NEXT DOOR
Crude sexual content. No passes. Fr-Mon 1:30 4:30 7:30 10:10 Tue-Thurs 7:30 10:10

THE ALAMO
Fr-Mon 12:35 3:15 6:45 9:45 Tue-Thurs 6:45 9:45

ELLA ENCHANTED
No passes. Fr-Mon 1:30 4:05 6:30 9:05 Tue-Thurs 6:30 9:05

14A **THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST**
English subtitles. Brutal and gory violence, disturbing content. Fr Sat Sun Mon 1:20 4:10 7:30 10:10 Tue Wed Thu 7:30 10:10

14A **STARSKY AND HUTCH**
Daily 9:40 7:45

HIDALGO
Violence. 12:30 9:30

NASCAR 30: THE IMAX EXPERIENCE
12:30 2:15 4:00 6:00 7:30 9:00

14A **TAKING LIES**
Violence. 10:30

DAWN OF THE DEAD
Gory violence throughout. 10:20

THE GIRL NEXT DOOR
12:25 3:45 6:45 9:40

SCOOBY-DOO 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:15

THE LADYKILLERS
Coarse language.

HELLBOY
Violence. 12:45 3:40 6:40 9:40

STARSKY AND HUTCH
Daily 9:40

DAWN OF THE DEAD
Gory violence throughout. 10:20

THE GIRL NEXT DOOR
12:25 3:45 6:45 9:40

SCOOBY-DOO 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED
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THE LADYKILLERS
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STARSKY AND HUTCH
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THE LADYKILLERS
Coarse language.

HELLBOY
Violence. 12:45 3:40 6:40 9:40

STARSKY AND HUTCH
Daily 9:40

DAWN OF THE DEAD
Gory violence throughout. 10:20

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
English subtitles. Brutal and gory violence, disturbing content. Daily 12:30 2:00 3:30 5:15 6:40 9:40

STARSKY AND HUTCH
Daily 8:00 10:15

HIDALGO
Violence. Daily 12:40 3:50 7:00 9:55

DAWN OF THE DEAD
Gory violence throughout. Daily 9:35

THE LADYKILLERS
Coarse language. Daily 1:10 4:00 7:15 9:45

JERSEY GIRL
Daily 1:40 4:20 6:50 9:10

SCOOBY-DOO 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED
Daily 12:10 2:30 4:50 7:25

THE PRINCE AND ME
Daily 1:30 4:10 6:55 9:30

HELLBOY
Violence. Daily 1:20 4:30 7:20 10:00

HOME ON THE RANGE
Daily 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

WALKING TALL
Violence. Daily 12:50 3:10 5:30 8:10 10:20

THE GIRL NEXT DOOR
Crude sexual content. No passes. Daily 1:50 5:20 7:50 10:30

THE WHOLE TEN YARDS
Daily 2:10 4:40 7:40 10:05

ELLA ENCHANTED
No passes. Daily 12:20 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

JOHNSON FAMILY VACATION
Daily 2:20 4:45 7:45 10:10

WEST MALL 6
8882-170 St. 444-1331

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
Frightening scenes. Fr-Sun 2:10 4:20 6:40 Mon-Thurs 6:40

THE LAST BANQUET
Gory scenes. Fr-Sun 2:50 6:30 9:30 Mon-Thurs 6:30 9:30

SCOOBY-DOO 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED
Coarse language, sexual content. Daily 8:50

WIN A DATE WITH TAD HAMILTON!
Fr-Sun 2:20 4:40 6:50 9:00 Mon-Thurs 6:50 9:00

YOU GOT SERVED
Fr-Sun 2:05 4:40 7:20 9:20 Mon-Thurs 7:20 9:20

BIG FISH
Not recommended for young children. Fr-Sun 2:00 4:30 7:10 9:40 Mon-Thurs 7:10 9:40

14A **CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN**
Fr-Sun 2:30 4:50 7:00 9:10 Mon-Thurs 7:00 9:10

14A **THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST**
English subtitles. Brutal and gory violence, disturbing content. Fr-Mon 12:05 3:30 7:05 Tue-Thurs 7:05

STARSKY AND HUTCH
Daily 9:50

HIDALGO
Violence. Daily 9:10

THE LADYKILLERS
Coarse language. Daily 10:00

SCOOBY-DOO 2: MONSTERS UNLEASHED
Fr-Mon 12:00 2:15 4:40 7:00 Tue-Thurs 7:00

THE PRINCE AND ME
Fr-Mon 1:45 4:35 7:15 9:55 Tue-Thurs 7:15 9:55

WALKING TALL
Violence. Fr-Mon 1:00 3:20 7:00 9:35 Tue-Thurs 7:20 9:35

HELLBOY
Violence. Fr-Mon 12:35 4:00 6:55 9:40 Tue-Thurs 6:55 9:40

HOME ON THE RANGE
Fr-Mon 12:30 2:05 4:15 7:10 Tue-Thurs 7:10

THE WHOLE TEN YARDS
Fr-Mon 12:20 3:00 6:50 9:25 Tue-Thurs 6:50 9:25



Epic Photography

Dybbuk of love

Supernatural romance troubles a Jewish village in *A Dybbuk* for Two People

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

A *Dybbuk for Two People* takes place on a long, raised wooden stage that runs nearly the entire length of the Third Space, and much of the show is lit not from above but by a network of lamps located

beneath the stage and which shine eerily through the gaps between the planks. Not only is this a resourceful way of keeping a tall actor like Jeff Haslam from clunking his head on a klieg light as he performs the show, but it also sets an unusually evocative mood for the entire production—the ghostly shafts of light shining up from beneath the actors' feet give you the sense of the hidden, invisible world breaking through into this one.

Which is precisely what this play (adapted by Bruce Myers from Sholom Ansky's original play, a staple of the Yiddish theatre) is all about. It's a romance in the form of

a horror story: Chanon, an earnest young student of the Kaballah, loves Leah, but her father has arranged for her to marry a man with better financial prospects. His heart weakened by passion and his body weak-

REVUE THEATRE

ened by excessive fasting and long hours of study, Chanon dies—but his spirit wanders the cosmos as a *dybbuk*, which takes possession of Leah's body on her wedding day. A rabbi is called in to remove the *dybbuk*, but Chanon's desire to remain

united with Leah is so immense and so desperate that he refuses to obey the rabbi's demands.

Myers tells this story with plain-spoken economy—he portrays even the most amazing supernatural occurrences in a matter-of-fact way that reflects these characters' belief that spirits and demons were as much a part of the world as human beings. He's equally direct in his handling of the characters' emotions. This is no melodrama: characters in melodrama always have a streak of self-indulgence to them, but Chanon's feelings for Leah are too pure for him to make a melodramatic spectacle of himself. Jeff Haslam and Caroline Livingstone are wonderful together—I love the way they convey that, for all the wild love Leah and Chanon feel for each other, they both share an essentially serious-minded, philosophical approach to life. This play has been called a Jewish *Romeo and Juliet*, but Leah and Chanon are much less the victims of fate and their own unwise impulses than Shakespeare's young lovers; they take control of their own destinies, and nothing they do is a mistake.

IF ANYTHING, the play reminds me more of *R&J*, Joe Calarco's adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* in which Shakespeare's play was acted out by four prep-school boys. *A Dybbuk for Two People* has a similar frame story about a husband and wife who act out Leah and Chanon's story as a kind of Sabbath ritual—Haslam and Livingstone play this couple too, as well as all the incidental characters in Leah and Chanon's story. As you watch all this role-playing going on, you can't help

but observe that acting itself is a little like being possessed by a *dybbuk* in that it requires you to surrender your body to an alien personality. Haslam, for instance, also plays Leah's tetchy grandmother as well as her bull-headed father, and he gets laughs from both roles without turning them into broad comic turns. Under the skillful direction of Trevor Schmidt, Haslam gives one of his most heartfelt, unadorned performances—he gets a stunningly selfless moment near the end of the play when Chanon's spirit tells Leah that he's forgotten even his own name. "It is only through your thoughts that I can remember myself."

Livingstone, meanwhile, has never looked more beautiful than she does here—she has a compelling stillness to her that makes the moments where Leah takes action (inviting Chanon's ghost to her wedding, stepping outside the magic circle the rabbi has drawn around her to be united with Chanon) register as hugely significant despite their apparent smallness. The score (arranged by Ryan Sigurdson and played by violist Emma Hooper) and Roy Jackson's lighting further give the play texture without spoiling the simplicity of its presentation. Northern Light Theatre has dedicated this season to plays about "Love Gone Wrong"; with *A Dybbuk for Two People*, everything's gone right. **B**

A DYBBUK FOR TWO PEOPLE

Directed by Trevor Schmidt • Written by Bruce Myers • Starring Jeff Haslam and Caroline Livingstone • The Third Space (11516-103 St) • To Apr 11 • 471-1586

Interned engagement

Henry Shimizu's portrayal of the Japanese internment is anything but gloomy

By AGNIESZKA MATEJKO

It was one of those interminably long days when you think spring will never come. I was feeling low and downcast as I walked under the steely gray sky over crumbling leaves left over from last summer. And the interview I was going to didn't seem likely to lift my despondent spirit either.

I was on my way to meet Dr. Henry Shimizu, an artist who paints scenes from one of the worst episodes in Canadian history, the internment of 22,000 Japanese-Canadians during World War II. He and his family were forced out of their homes and shipped to a remote area in B.C.—so remote, in fact, that there was no hope of walking out on foot, the only form of transportation allowed in the camps. Meanwhile, his family's hotel was confiscated and sold for a pittance to more acceptable "racially pure" citizens. If ever there was man who had a right to be angry, it was Shimizu. As I walked, I wondered how gloomy his art must be, how seething his anger and how righteous his indignation.

I was dead wrong on all counts. Within a few minutes of meeting Shimizu and looking at his art, the clouds seemed to lift and life's troubles seemed like stepping stones to a hopeful future.

"*Gamen* is a Japanese term that means to persist, to keep your hopes up, don't give up, don't look back," Shimizu says. "That was a key catchword that was often heard [in the camp]." His camp #8 of New Denver was not a place of gloom and doom where internees sat and despaired. "For once we were in a community that was friendly," Shimizu explains.

In B.C. at the time, all people of Asian extraction—even the ones born in Canada—were relegated to the status of second-class citizens. They were not allowed to vote or enter professions. "As one of the politicians said, 'We should send them back to where they came from,'" Shimizu recalls. "But the problem was that most of us came from Canada. Over 50 per cent were Canadian-born." In the small ghost town where the camp was located, Japanese-Canadians formed the majority, outnumbering the local population 200 to 1. "Racism soon disappeared," Shimizu says. "We went from being a minority to a majority. We went to a feeling of relief to be there." Over time, this community developed their own store and their own baseball team, as well as organizing dances and community events. They began to

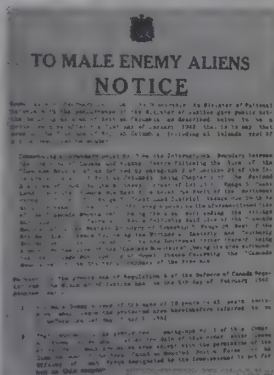


govern their own lives and forged a community spirit so strong that it left indelible memories. In fact, once they were allowed to go, as many as 20 families decided to remain.

THAT'S THE KIND of community Shimizu talks about as he takes me on a tour of his paintings—a hope-

PREVIEW VISUAL ARTS

ful, close-knit storybook world seen through the eyes of a boy. There are scattered log houses nestled in a lush B.C. valley. Men like Shimizu's father built these houses from the money collected from their own confiscated properties, but this uncomfortable truth is not visible in the art. All of the picturesque houses are surrounded by neat vegetable gardens. One



garden stands out from the rest, a lovingly tended Japanese rock garden that surrounded Shimizu's own home. "We had to rely on vegetables from other people, but everyone [visited] the garden," he recalls.

As Shimizu takes me through each scene, we come across a picture of nuns posing sternly in front of his schoolhouse. My mind immediately turns to the horror stories of residential schools and enforced religious retraining. But in fact Shimizu expresses deep gratitude to the nuns: at the end of the internment, when his family had nowhere to go, it was the nuns who arranged for his family to get jobs and a place to stay at Misericordia Hospital. "My youngest brother and sister were boarded at the Sacred Heart School," he says. "The archbishop arranged all this

through the efforts of the nuns. They were very good to us."

Ironically, the injustices of the Canadian government designed to shove Japanese-Canadians aside and make room for a more "worthy" race, freed a population fettered by racism. After the internment they were no longer consigned to being market gardeners in B.C. "When you got out of B.C. you could enter professions," Shimizu says. "In B.C. we were told we were second-class citizens. In many ways, [the internment] changed our outlook on life. It expanded the vision of Japanese-Canadians. The fetters of racism on the West Coast had been broken." **B**

IMAGES OF INTERNMENT: 1942-1946

By Henry Shimizu • Extension Centre Gallery • To Apr 14

Visions of Johannesburg

Liisa Repo-Martell vividly evokes childhood and apartheid in *The Syringa Tree*

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

It's strange how sometimes the smallest moments in an actor's performance are the ones that stick with you. In *The Syringa Tree*, for instance, Liisa Repo-Martell plays two dozen characters, both black and white, all of them living under apartheid in South Africa in the '60s. She pulls off all sorts of terrific acting feats over the course of her nearly two-hour performance, but none more striking than the scene where Salamina (the Xhosa nanny in charge of Elizabeth, the play's precocious six-year-old narrator) is reunited with her daughter Moliseng, who's gone missing during a stay in the hospital. "Dumela Moliseng!" she cries, almost in tears with relief and joy. "Yhe! Dumela Moliseng!" And there's something about the way Repo-Martell has Salamina spin around with Moliseng in her arms and stamp the earth with her bare foot that I don't think I'll ever forget—the gesture is such a perfect expression of Salamina's emotions and yet Repo-Martell performs it with such a lack of self-consciousness that it feels like one of those rare moments where an actor's personality gets completely subsumed into the character they're playing.

The play's most sustained acting triumph, however, is Repo-Martell's delightful characterization of Elizabeth Grace. As someone who's seen a lot of "theatre for young audiences" can tell you, there's often something ghastly about the sight of grown-up actors playing children, but Repo-Martell captures the vocal inflections and fidgety body language of a little girl in such an uncanny way that somehow it never feels like you're watching an adult acting childish—instead you feel as though you're just watching a child.

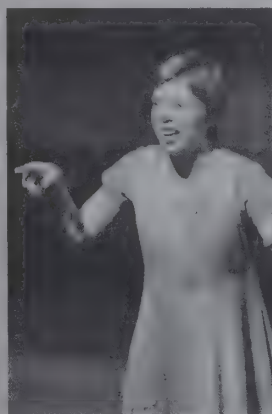
Playwright Pamela Gien runs the risk of sentimentalizing South Africa by telling a story through the perspective of a privileged child like Elizabeth and her relationship with her adoring black nanny, but I think Gien's approach actually allows her to do something fairly complex. Her script skillfully shows how all of Elizabeth's happiest childhood memories

are tainted by the effects of apartheid: Moliseng has to stay hidden from the neighbours because she lacks registration papers, Elizabeth's grandfather is killed by Rhodesian "freedom fighters" and even Salamina abruptly walks out on Elizabeth and her family. Apartheid prevented blacks from taking ownership of their own country, but Gien makes the provocative suggestion that it wound up alienating a lot of South African-born whites from their homeland as well: Elizabeth's mother, for instance, hates living there—or at least she hates having to accept a racist political and social system as "normal." And when Elizabeth grows up, she's so sickened by apartheid that she leaves the country the first chance she gets.

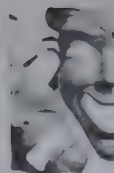
GIEN AND REPO-MARTELL do a wonderful job of evoking the grinding, day-to-day frustrations of living under apartheid—from the distant sounds Elizabeth hears of police beating up blacks caught in the wrong part of town without the proper papers to the essential sense of, well, *apart-ness* that wedges itself into every conversation between blacks and whites. (There's a striking scene, for instance, where Pietros, one of the Graces' servants, abruptly tells Elizabeth's mother that even though she was born there, this isn't her country; it's *his* country, and she must go back "to her own country over the sea.")

But the play is also a wonderful evocation of childhood—of afternoons spent sitting on the kitchen floor licking an empty tin of condensed milk, and nights watching the dust motes float in the moonlight above your bed and imagining it's fairy dust, and entire days listening to the grown-ups talk over your head and only half-understanding what they're on about. Elizabeth says a lot of cute and adorable things over the course of the play, but you never get the sense that Repo-Martell is trying to ingratiate herself with the audience. She's always in the moment, always truthful, always convincing, effortlessly creating a fully populated world with nothing more than her voice and her body—it's a virtuoso performance that, paradoxically, never calls attention to itself. How appropriate it is that her character's last name is Grace. ●

REVUE THEATRE



THE SYRINGA TREE
Directed by Jeannette Lambermont • Written by Pamela Gien • Starring Liisa Repo-Martell • Rice Theatre, The Citadel • To Apr 18 • 425-1820



theatre notes

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

Chef's big score

The Last Supper of Antonin Carême • Catalyst Theatre (8529 Gateway Blvd) • To Apr 18 • preVUE "We have a workshop in Calgary in the old Hudson Bay building with great big timber beams," says Steve Pearce of the Old Trout Puppet Workshop, "and there's a kitchen in there where we all tend to eat our meals together. But I'm afraid they tend to be greasy Bavarian stews—nothing terribly elaborate."

The subject of the Trouts' latest puppet production, *The Last Supper of Antonin Carême*, would be appalled. Born in Paris in 1783, Carême rose from the depths of poverty—his father abandoned the 10-year-old Carême in the streets—to become the most celebrated chef in France. He introduced Russian dishes like borscht and colic-iac into European cuisine, invented the vol-au-vent, designed a variety of kitchen utensils and cooking vessels and even created the tall white hat that chefs wear to this day. His sense of showmanship was unparalleled; Carême believed in elaborate centrepieces and took a particular delight in crafting detailed (if inedible) historical tableaux out of nothing but almond paste and confectioner's sugar. He was called the king of cooks and the cook of kings, managing the kitchens of Talleyrand for 12 years, and also serving the future King George IV of England, Tsar Alexander I of Russia and the Baron de Rothschild before his death at the age of 50, "burnt out," as one historian wrote, "by the flame of his genius and the charcoal of the roasting spit."

I glean all this information from the pages of the *Larousse Gastronomique*, the same mammoth culinary encyclopedia in which Pearce and the Trouts first encountered Carême's story. "We'd been developing a play about a chef and his apprentice," Pearce says, "where the chef would have a sense of taste but the apprentice would not—he'd learn everything by rote. We liked the idea of someone who cooked without the joy of eating, and Antonin's story seemed to mesh well with that idea: he was well-known for writing cookbooks that demanded meticulous measurements of all the ingredients, and he was a big stickler for how dishes were named. He was all about the quantification of food and recipes and not so much the qualitative sense of taste. In fact, Carême went so far as to say he didn't consider confectionery to be a wing of cuisine at all; he considered it a wing of architecture."

Carême's fanatical pursuit of ever more spectacular dishes to serve his aristocratic clients also struck the Trouts as an interesting way of dramatizing their ideas about the quest for the sublime. "What is the sublime?" Pearce asks. "Food is interesting because

on the one hand, it's sustenance; it's something that we can shove in our cakehole in order to be able to live. But on the other hand, it's also something that can taste quite marvelous and indescribable. It can be a joyous revelation that sets the bells of creation ringing, or it can be something that just keeps you from keeling over or getting a headache.... And I guess the question we're asking is whether a loaf of bread can be more sublime than a grand, architectural cake, or whether it's simply a matter of attitude toward both of them."

It's easy to dismiss Carême's creations as one more manifestation of the perversity of French high culture—the same decadent fondness for incredibly expensive, infuriatingly impractical displays of specialized artistry that keeps so many *haute couture* designers in business today. But Pearce takes a broader view of the matter. "I don't know," he says. "I think each culture develops its own hifalutin useless things. I mean, why would anyone drive an incredibly inconvenient vehicle like a Hummer if not to tell the world their status? The French do the same thing—they just do it with food and fancy clothes."

Songs from a marriage

The Adventures of Wanda and Jack • Varscona Theatre • To Apr 11 • reVUE In *The Adventures of Wanda and Jack*, Michele Brown and Paul Morgan Donald play struggling country music duo Wanda Wilcox and Jack Stanton, who got married on Friday the 13th. It's a little mysterious as to why an astrology buff like Wanda would ever have agreed to that date, but I suspect it's because it enables her to blame their lack of success on some abstract concept of "unluckiness" instead of their own character flaws. Wanda remains hopeful that each of their poorly paid small-town gigs could be the one that vaults them into the big time, but it's all too obvious that they spend a lot more time bickering and sniping at each other than they do rehearsing and writing songs. Their arguments, in fact, are their best collaborations.

Brown and Donald's play alternates between Wanda and Jack's stage act and slice-of-life scenes showing the couple backstage, on the road or hanging out in their trailer. There's no plot, just a gradual accumulation of character—the setting is completely different, but in a weird way, the play's quiet, observational tone reminds me of Evan S. Connell's twin novels *Mr. Bridge* and *Mrs. Bridge*.

The play is full of details—such as Wanda's fascination with '70s singer Bobbie Gentry or Jack's habit of buying Wanda flowers and then unromantically tossing them at her—that are strange but totally convincing, and Brown and Donald have written some winning songs, particularly the title number and the poignant "Looking for Alibis." Even so, this 60-minute show feels slight and ultimately unsatisfying—it's got a lot of sharp observations but no epiphanies. We're told that the song "The Adventures of Wanda and Jack" never ends, that actually it has hundreds of verses and that Wanda writes a new one every day. I think the play *The Adventures of Wanda and Jack* has a great melody, but I'd suggest that Brown and Donald still need to write a final verse. ●

ARTS WEEKLY

Fax your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to listings@vue.ab.ca. Deadline is Friday at 3pm

DANCE

LORD OF THE DANCE Jubilee Auditorium 11455-87 Ave (451-8000) • Celtic dance featuring Michael Flatley • Tue, Apr. 13 (8pm) • \$65/\$35 • Tickets available at TicketMaster

THE MAGIC FLUTE Jubilee Auditorium,

11455-87 Ave (428-6839/451-8000) • Royal Winnipeg Ballet production with choreography by Mark Godden. Music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart • Apr. 16-17 (8pm) • Tickets available at Alberta Ballet, TicketMaster

MIDNIGHT AT THE OASIS Festival Place, 100 Festival Way, Sherwood Park (439-6960/449-3378) • Middle Eastern bellydance recital presented by Isis Dance Productions • Sun, Apr. 11 (8pm) • \$15 • Tickets available at Isis Dance, Festival Place box office

RODA DE CAPOEIRA The Capoeira

Academy, 6807-104 St (709-3500) www.capoeiraedmonton.com • A free performance of a Brazilian mix of dance, martial arts and percussion • Every Sat (2-3pm)

SEANCHAIDH Winspear Centre (428-1414) • Celtic music and dance featuring the 78th Fraser Highlanders Pipe Band and the Celtic Accent Dance Company • Sat, Apr. 10 (8pm) • \$35/\$45/\$55 • Tickets available at the Winspear Centre box office

GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL GALLERY 10186-106 St (488-6611/4808-3900) • Open Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm, Thu 10am-8pm (closed all hols) • **MAKING MUSIC:** Handmade musical instruments; until May 1 • **Discovery**

Gallery: IMAGE SERVES THE TECHNIQUE Hot glass and metal artworks by Martha Henry; Apr. 10-May 16; opening reception: Sat, Apr. 12 (2-4pm) • **A WOMAN'S PLACE** Textiles by Sanna Kaiser; Apr. 10-May 16; opening reception: Sat, Apr. 12 (2-4pm)

ART BEAT GALLERY 26 St. Anne Street, St. Albert (593-3679) • **OUR WAY OF SEEING** THINGS: Watercolour paintings by Mel Heath, Fran Heath, Karen Findlay Apr. 10-May 1 • Opening reception: Sat, Apr. 10 (1-4pm)

ARTSHAB STUDIO GALLERY 3rd Floor, Nkol Building, 10217-106 St (423-2966) • Open Thu 5-8pm or by appointment • Artworks by Ryan Brown, Jeff Collins, Aaron Pederson, Tim Rechner, Paul Roberts, Gabriela Rosende, Greg Swain, Anna Szul, Eugene Uhuad and guests

CENTRE D'ARTS VISUELS DE L'ALBERTA 9103-95 Ave (461-3427) • **FACES PLACES AND SPACES:** Artworks by Doris Charest, Léanne Carrobourg, Mélanie Carroû, Monika Dery, Linda Cuyler, and Danielle Morency • Apr. 16-28 • Opening reception: Apr. 16 (7-8:30pm)

DOUGLAS UDELL GALLERY 10332-124 St (488-4445) • **SPRING SHOW:** Artworks by gallery artists • Until Apr. 17

EDMONTON ART GALLERY 2 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (422-6223) • Open Tue-Wed and Fri 10:30am-5pm; Thu 10:30am-8pm; Sat, Sun 11am-5pm. Closed Mon • **MAXWELL**

SEE PAGE 46

BATES: AT THE CROSSROADS OF EXPRESSIONISM: Until Apr. 18 • Ken Macklin: until June 6 • **FIELD NOTES:** Artworks by the O'Flanagan brothers; until June 6 • **AFTER DARK:** Featuring J.I.F.; Sat, Apr. 10; \$15 (adv) • **ALL IN ONE DAY SUNDAY:** Sun, Apr. 18 • **ARTISTS IN DIALOGUE:** Tour with artists Lyndal Osborne and John Freeman: *Tidal Trace*; Sun, Apr. 18 (1pm) • **Kitchen Gallery: TIDAL TRACE:** A multimedia installation by Lyndal Osborne and John Freeman; until June 6 • **Children's Gallery: SPELLBOUND:** until Jan. 2005 • \$8 (adult)/\$6 (student/senior), \$4 (children 6-12)/free (member/children 5 and under)

ELECTRUM DESIGN STUDIO 12419 Stony Plain Rd (482-1402): Open Tue-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 10am-4pm • **THE DANCE:** Pastels by Pamela Copeland • Until May 1

EXTENSION CENTRE GALLERY 2nd Fl, 8303-112 St • FACE TO FACE: Mixed media artworks by Wendy Rao • Apr. 17-28 • Opening reception: Fri, Apr. 16 (6-9pm)

FAB GALLERY Room 1-1, Fine Arts Building, 112 St, 89 Ave, U of A Campus (492-2081): Open Tue-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 2pm-5pm • **DESIGNOLOGY:** Bachelor of design grad show; until Apr. 17 • Opening reception: Thu, Apr. 8 (7-10pm)

FORT DOOR 10308-81 Ave (432-7535): Open Mon-Wed 10am-6pm; Thu-Fri 10am-9pm; Sat 10am-6pm; Sun 12-5pm • Eskimo soapstone carvings, caribou by H. Islaunik.

Indian and Eskimo silver and gold jewellery by B. Wilson • Through April

FRINGE GALLERY Bsmr 10516 Whyte Ave (432-0240): Open Mon-Sat 9:30am-6pm • **PRESERVE:** Photomontage works by Paul Freeman • Until Apr. 30

GALLERY DE JONGE 27022A Hwy 16A, Spruce Grove (962-9505): Open Tue-Sun 11-5pm, anytime by appointment • Work by local artists Beth Coulas, Earl Cummins, Henry de Jager and Mary Masters

GIORDANO GALLERY 10080 Jasper Ave (429-5066): **SPRING SHOW 2004:** Artworks by Canadian artists • Until Apr. 21

GRANT MACLEAN COLLEGE City Centre Campus • 3 HEADED OFFSPRING: Design works by graduates of the Visual Communication program • Until Apr. 10, closed Apr. 9 • Opening reception: Thu, Apr. 8 (7-9pm)

HARCOURT HOUSE 10215-112 St (426-4180): Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 12-4pm • **INCARNATION:** Photographs by Vancouver artist Susan Bozic; until May 1 • **Front Room: FROM THE INSIDE OUT:** Artworks by Tandie McLeod; until May 1

JEFF ALLEN ART GALLERY Strathcona Place Senior Centre, 10831 University Ave (433-5807): Open Mon-Fri 9am-4pm • Watercolours by Joyce Björke; until May 6

JOHNSON GALLERY 7711-85 St (465-6171): Open Mon-Fri 9am-5:30pm, Sat 9am-5pm • Artworks by Dave Ripley, Myrle Steen, Meta Ranger, Elizabeth Hibbs, Marion Barker and George Webber. Bronzes by Gina McDougall-Cohoe Through April

JOHNSON GALLERY 11817-80 St (479-8424): Open Mon-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm; Sat 9:30am-4pm • Artworks by Wendy Risdale, Jim Painter. Prints by Myles McDonald. Bronzes by Gina McDougall-Cohoe • Through April

MACLEAN CENTRE FOR THE ARTS 10045-156 St (497-4321): Visual Communication Design grad show presented by Grant MacLean College • Until Apr. 10

McMULLEN GALLERY U of A Hospital, 8440-112 St (407-7152): **ALEGRIA:** Paintings and sculptures by Annette Ayre, Carol Hill, Pat Di Marcello, Ingrid Martell, Mary Topping, Jayne Willoughby Scott and Mary Wright • Apr. 10-June 26 • Opening reception: Thu, Apr. 15 (7-9pm, tentative)

MCPEG MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC ART GALLERY 5411-51 St, Stony Plain (963-2777): Open 10am-4pm • **PULSE-A NORTHERN ALBERTA DRAWING EXHIBITION:** Apr. 9-May 4 • Opening reception: Sun, Apr. 11 (1-3:30pm)

MUSÉE HÉRITAGE MUSEUM 5 St, Anne Street, St. Albert (459-1528): Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun 1-5pm • **INUKSUK: IF STONES COULD SPEAK:** Until Apr. 18

PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY 19 Perron Street, St. Albert (460-4310): Open Tue-Sat 10-5pm; Thu 10am-8pm • **HIDDEN TALENTS IV:** Artworks by participants of St. Albert's Community Services art classes; Apr. 15-30; opening reception: Thu, Apr. 15 (7-9pm) • **THE SPEEDING SUBJECT:** A group exhibition of paintings and drawings featuring artworks by Mary Joyce; until Apr. 10 • **ARTIST TRADING CARD SESSIONS:** Sat, Apr. 10 (12-4pm); free (donation for materials) • **ARTVENTURES:** Sat,

Apr. 17 (1-4pm); \$2 (per child)

PROVINCIAL MUSEUM OF ALBERTA 12845-102 Ave (453-9100): Open: Sat-Thu 9am-5pm; Fri 9am-9pm • **THROUGH THE EYE OF THE NEEDLE:** Embroidery traditions and high craftsmanship of women from Gujarat, India; until June 6 • **IN THE SHADOW OF VOLCANOES:** Indonesian artworks; until June 6 • **BIG THINGS 2:** Featuring large-scale sculptures by the artists of the North Edmonton Sculpture Workshop; until Apr. 30 • **SYN-CRUE CANADA ABORIGINAL PEOPLES GALLERY:** Spanning 11,000 years and 500 generations, people of the past and present, recordings, film, lights, artifacts and more. Permanent exhibit • **Spotlight Gallery: EVERY MOTHER'S FEAR: ALBERTA'S POLIO EXPERIENCE:** until Sept. 12 • **Orientation Gallery: ALBERTA NATURESCAPES:** Photographs by Michael Chesworth; until Apr. 25 • **The Natural History Gallery: BUG ROOM:** Live invertebrate display. Permanent exhibit • **THE BIRD GALLERY:** Mounted birds. Permanent exhibit • **TREASURES OF THE EARTH:** Geology collection. Permanent exhibit • **WILD ALBERTA GALLERY:** Permanent exhibit

RED STRAP ART MARKET 10305-97 St (497-2211): Open: Tue-Sun 11am-5pm • Artworks by various artists and artisans

RIGOLETTE'S CAFÉ 10068-108 St • AIDA TO ZAZA: Featuring artworks by various artists • Until Apr. 30

SCOTT GALLERY 10411-124 St (488-3619): Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • **CANADIAN TRAVELS:** Landscape and still life paintings by Phyllis Anderson • Apr. 17-May 4 • Opening reception: Sat, Apr. 17 (2-4pm)

SNAP GALLERY 10137-104 St (423-1492): Open Tue-Sat (12-5pm) • **READING THE HOMESTEAD:** Printmaking artworks by Darlene Kalynka • Until Apr. 17

SNOWBIRD GALLERY WEM, 8882-170 St (444-1024): Work by J. Yardley-Jones and Gregg Johnson, acrylics by Jim Vest, pottery by Noburo Kubo and Jacqueline Stenberg

STANLEY A. MILNER LIBRARY Centre for Reading and the Arts • MILLENNIUM IN A BOX: Handmade books, a conceptual interpretation of where the millennium is leading by Canadian artists. Presented by the Edmonton Public Library, Centre for Reading and the Arts; until June 30 • **THE ART OF THE BOOK:** Ars Libri speaks about the traditional craft of bookbinding; Sun, May 2 (2pm)

STUDIO GALLERY 143 Grandin Park Plaza, St. Albert (460-5990): Open: Tue-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 10am-4pm, or by appt • **WESTERN SPACE:** Artworks by Bruce Thompson, Doug Fraser and Bruce Allen • Until Apr. 30

VAAA GALLERY 3rd Fl, Harcourt House, 10215-112 St (421-1731) • CLAY CREATES CULTURE: Alberta Potters' Association Juried Membership Exhibition: Clay works by members of the Alberta Potters' Association • Until May 1

VANDERLEELIE GALLERY 10183-112 St (452-0286): Open: Tue-Sat 11am-5pm • **SHOREMILE:** Photo-realist landscape paintings by Barbara Hirst • Apr. 10-27

WESTMOUNT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM 11125-131 St (473-3969): **ANNUAL WOODCARVING SHOW:** Carvings featuring works by Northern Alberta Woodcarvers Association • Sat, Apr. 17 (10am-5pm); Sun, Apr. 18 (10am-5pm)

THE WORKS GALLERY Commerce Place, Main Fl, 10150 Jasper Ave (426-2122 ext. 226): Open: Mon-Fri 12-5pm • **25 YEARS OF GRAPHIC SOCIAL SATIRE:** Artworks by the Inx Group • Apr. 13-23

LITERARY

AUDREYS BOOKS 10702 Jasper Ave (423-3487): Book launch for Tracy Cooper-Posey's new book *The Heart of Vengeance*; Wed, Apr. 14 (7-30pm) • Elizabeth Hudson reading from her new book *Snow Babies: A Woman's Life on the Street*; Thu, Apr. 15 (7-30pm)

BACKROOM VODKA BAR 201, 10324-82 Ave • Mumbo Jumbo: A word circus presented by the Raving Poets • Every Tue (8pm) until August

LIVE COMEDY

ARTS BARN Westbury Theatre, 10330-84 Ave (420-1757): **An Evening of Political Comedy:** Political comedy presented by the Parkland Institute featuring Greg Malone, Ben Sures and Three Dead Troils in a Baggie in *Damned, Drained and Hosed* • Thu, Apr. 22 (8pm) • Tickets available at Audrey's, Volume II Books, Earth's General Store, The Parkland Institute, TIX on the Square

THE COMEDY FACTORY 3414 Gateway Boulevard (469-4999): Bob Angeli; Apr. 8-10 • David Gray; Apr. 15-17

FARGO'S 10307-82 Ave (433-4526): Improv comedy • Every Sun

LEGENDS PUB 6104 172 St (481-2786): Comedy Mondays With Yuk Yuks on Tour

RED'S WEM (481-6420): Hypno Sundays •

9:30pm • Free

THEATRE

ALL CLEAR The Roxy, 10708-124 St (453-2440): Presented by Theatre Network • Bradley Moss directs John Wright, Marianne Copithorne, Brian Dooley, Jesse Gervais and Vanessa Holmes in *A Guide to Mourning* playwright Eugene Strickland's futuristic drama about a family struggling to stave off despair after a global disaster destroys nearly every last remnant of civilization • Apr. 18; Tue-Sat (8pm); Sun (2pm) • \$18/\$15 • Two For One: Tue, Apr. 13 • Tickets available at Roxy Theatre box office

CHIMP/PRO! Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695): Long-form improvisational sketches performed by Rapid Fire Theatre's top improvisers • Every Sat (11pm) except last Sat of each month

DIE-NASTY Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695): Jeff Haslam, Stephanie Wolfe, Mark Meer, Josh Dean, Davina Stewart and Leona Brausen celebrate the 13th season of Edmonton's legendary live improvised soap opera by spoofing the '60s melodramas of Douglas Sirk and Grace Metalious • Every Monday (8pm)

A DYBBUK FOR TWO PEOPLE 3rd Space, 11516-103 St (471-1586/420-1757): Presented by Northern Light Theatre • Trevor Schmidt directs Caroline Livingstone and Jeff Haslam in Bruce Myers's two-person adaptation of Sholom Ansky's classic Yiddish play about a young woman who is possessed by the spirit of her dead lover after she is forced to wed another man as part of an arranged marriage • Until Apr. 11 (8pm); Sun matinees (2pm) • \$18 (adult)/\$15 (student/senior); Two-For-One Sun matinee: Apr. 11 • Tickets available at TIX on the Square, Northern Light Theatre, door

THE LAST SUPPER OF ANTONIN CARÉME Caréme Theatre, 8529-103 St (420-1757): Performed by The Old Trout Puppet Workshop • Until Apr. 18, Wed-Sun (8pm); no shows Apr. 11-12 • \$21 (adult)/\$16 (student/senior) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

LOVE ACCORDING TO JOHN Jubilee Auditorium (455-0787): Presented by the Alberta Lyric Theatre • The 33rd annual production of the popular passion play about the last days of Jesus Christ • Apr. 9-10 (7:30pm) Apr. 11 (2:30pm) • \$15 and \$25 (adv)/\$20-25 (door)

THE PIRATE GHOST OF CAPTAIN SMUG Celebration, Dinner Theatre, Oasis Entertainment Hotel, 13103 Fort Rd (448-9339): The crew of the pirate ship *Scary Sails* set sail in search of buried treasure in this swashbuckling adventure, packed with music swordfights and mermaids • Until May 9, Wed-Sat (6:15pm), Sun (5:15pm) • Tickets range from \$34.95-\$49.95/\$20 (children 12 and under)

ROMEY AND JULIET La Cité Francophone, 8627 Rue Marie-Anne Gaboury (435-8542): Presented by Sound and Fury Theatre • Director Heather Fitzsimmons-Frey gives Shakespeare's classic tragedy about a pair of young lovers caught in the middle of a bitter family feud a Latin twist in this production, which transposes the action from Verona to 1930s Brazil and is influenced by the Brazilian art of *capoeira* • Apr. 15-May 2, Thu-Sat (8pm); Sun matinees (2pm) • \$14 (adult)/\$12 (student/senior); Sun matinees: Pay-What-You-Can (door) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

SHEAR MADNESS Mayfield Dinner Theatre, Mayfield Inn, 16615-109 Ave (483-4051): A wacky interactive murder mystery about an Edmonton hairdressing salon that is turned upside-down when the illustrious concert pianist who lives in the apartment upstairs is murdered • Until Apr. 18

THE SYRINGA TREE The Citadel, 9330 Theatre, 9828-101A Ave (425-1820): Liisa Repo-Martell plays 23 different roles in Pamela Gien's acclaimed one-woman coming-of-age play, which examines life under South Africa's apartheid government through the eyes of a British girl growing up in Johannesburg during the '60s and '70s • Until Apr. 18 • Tickets available at Citadel Theatre box office

THEATRESPORTS Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695): Presented by Rapid Fire Theatre • Teams of improvisers create sketches on the spot based on audience suggestions, and have the results evaluated by a team of heartless judges • Every Fri (11pm) • Tickets available by phone

THE WAY OF THE CROSS King's University College gym (465-8306/465-3500): Presented by the King's University College Department of Drama • A reflection on the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ featuring music, drama and dance • Apr. 9 (7pm) • \$10 (adult)/\$7 (senior/student)/\$5 (child under 12)

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Director: Bradley Moss
Set and Lighting Designer: David Fraser
Costume Designer: Leona Brausen
Sound Designer: Dave Clarke

APRIL 6-18

2 for 1
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EVENTS WEEKLY

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CLUBS/LECTURES

ADDRESSING AIDS Centennial Room, Stanley Milner Library (492-3080) • A panel of speakers explores domestic and international strategies for addressing global HIV/AIDS and the ramifications of current Canadian HIV/AIDS related foreign policy • Thu, Apr. 15 (7-9pm) • Free

AGAINST HIV/AIDS Faculty St. Jean, 8406 Marie-Anne Gaboury, 91 St. Rm. 138 (719-7708) • Learn to help people with HIV/AIDS, presented by the Madeleine Samson Foundation (organization for the Emancipation and autonomy of African women) • Apr. 17 (9am-5pm) • \$50 (non-member)/free (member); \$10 (membership cost) • Pre-registry

ANXIETY AND CREATIVITY Provincial Museum Auditorium, 12845-102 Ave • Lecture presented by Meredith O'Connell-Hodgson • Tue, Apr. 13 (7:30pm) • \$10 (Adult)/\$5 (student/senior) • Tickets available at the door

APIRG (ALBERTA PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCH GROUP) Remedy, 8631-109 St, upstairs (492-0614) • Open mic for activists to meet or reconnect with one another • Thu, Apr. 8 (7pm)

BUDDHIST MEDITATION 10762 Whyte Ave (437-3688) • Lojong (mind training) tape series presented by the Karma Tashi Ling Tibetan Buddhist Meditation Society • Every Wed (7:30pm)

ECARAW (EDMONTON COALITION AGAINST WAR AND RACISM) Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, 101, 10010-107A Ave (988-2713) • Public meeting • Sun, Apr. 18 (7pm)

EFFECTS OF URBINE NICOTINE EXPOSURE ON HENRYSON SOCIAL RESPONSIVENESS 5-135 Grant MacEwan College, City Centre Campus • Presented by Dr. Megan Easterbrook, part of the Mirfy Speakers Series • Thu, Apr. 15 (noon-1:30pm) • Free

KARMA TASHI LING TIBETAN BUDDHIST MEDITATION SOCIETY 10762 Whyte Ave (437-3688) • Lojong (Mind Training) Tape series. Meeting Wednesdays 7:30pm

KEEP OUR FORESTS ALIVE! Community Room

221A, second level Bonnie Doon Mall (432-0967) • Public discussion and teach-in on boreal forests presented by the Boreal Action Team and the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society • Thu, Apr. 15 (7-9pm)

SOUTH PACIFIC Tony Turtle, Rm 12 (492-3093) • Free lecture presented by Dr. Morris Maduro on South Pacific • Apr. 15 (6:30-9pm)

T.A.L.E.S. EDMONTON (433-2932) • Storytelling Invitation: every 2nd Fri (8pm) • The oral tradition of storytelling (be a listener or a storyteller)

THE TIBETAN BUDDHIST MEDITATION SOCIETY, GADEN SAMTEN LING 11403-101 St (479-0014) • Learn about Tibetan Buddhism and meditation with Kushok Dhamchoe of Namgyal Monastery in India • Every Tues (7-9pm); beginners • Every Wed (7-9pm) and Sun (11am-1pm); advanced

UPWARD BOUND TOASTMASTERS Baker Centre, 10th Fl, 10025-106 St (477-2613) • Every Wed (7pm): Weekly meeting about public speaking, and how to improve your communication and leadership skills

WASKAHEGAN TRAIL ASSOCIATION Bonnie Doon Recycle, 85 St, 85 Ave • (467-8662) Free guided hike, approx. 9 km at West Battle; Sun, Apr. 11 (10am) • (456-9046) Free guided hike, approx. 10 km at Pipestone; Sun, Apr. 18 (10am)

QUEER LISTINGS

AXIOS (454-8449) • A support group, local chapter of the international organization of Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic Gay and Lesbian Christians

BOOTS AND SADDLES 10242-106 St (423-5014) • Large tavern with pool tables, restaurant, shows. Members only

BUDDY'S NITE CLUB 11725B Jasper Ave (488-6636) • Open 9-3 • Dancing, strip contests, go-go boys • Every Mon: Free pool. DJs Arrow Chaser, Jeffy Pop, Code Red • No membership needed

DIGNITY EDMONTON (482-6845) • Support community for lesbian/gay Catholics and friends

DOWN UNDER 12224 Jasper Ave (482-7960) • Steam bath

EDMONTON RAINBOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (422-6207) • An organization for gay men and lesbians in business and their non-gay friends to share business knowledge, learn, make friends and network in a positive, proud space where being yourself is the norm

GAZ MEN'S OUTREACH CREW (GMOC) 45, 9912-106 St (488-0564) • Peer education initiative for gay/bisexual men that works toward preventing the spread of HIV by improving self-esteem

HIV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY 105, 10550-102 St (488-5742) • Programs and support services for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and related illnesses. Counseling, referrals, support groups, harm reduction, education, advocacy and public awareness campaigns

ICARE 702A, 10242-105 St (448-1768) • www.icarealberta.org • The Interfaith Centre for AIDS/HIV Resources and Education (formerly Interfaith Association on AIDS) provides spiritual support and connections for those affected by HIV/AIDS

ILLUSIONS SOCIAL CLUB GLCCE, Suite 45, 9912-106 St • Meetings every second Thursday each month

INSIDE/OUT U of A Campus • Monthly meetings for campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff of the U of A to network and socialize in a supportive environment (fall and winter terms). Contact Kris Wells (kwells@ualberta.ca) or Marjorie Wonham (mwonham@ualberta.ca) for info • www.ualberta.ca/~cled/eps/AgapeVerdana.htm

LAMBDA CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CHURCH Gamma United Church, 11148-84 Ave (474-0753) • Every Sun (7pm): Worship services. Serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community

LIVING POSITIVE www.connect.ab.ca/lvpeos (488-5768) • Edmonton Persons Living with HIV Society: free-facilitated support groups, peer counselling • Daily drop-in

LUTHERANS CONCERNED www.lcna.org (426-0905) • A spiritual community which gathers monthly for sharing, friendship, individual support and a safe space for our own spiritual questions

MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB www.makingwaves.edm • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Practices every Mon and Thu

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF EDMONTON (429-2321) • Weekly non-denominational church services

PLFAC GLCCE, Suite 45, 9912-106 St (462-5958) • Meetings every third Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm • Support/education for parents, families and friends of lesbians/gays/bisexuals/transgenderers

POLICE LIAISON COMMITTEE (421-2277/1-877-882-2011, ext. 2038) • Edmonton Police Service and the gay and lesbian community

PRIME TIMERS (426-7019) • Meetings every second Sunday of the month at 3pm. A social group for gay/bisexual men over 40 and their friends

THE ROOST 10345-104 St (426-3150) • Open Sun-Thru 8pm-3am, Fri-Sat 8pm-4am • TUE: Hot Butt Contest (8pm-midnight) with DJ Janney • WED: Amateur strip with Weena Luv, Sticky Vicky, DJ Alvaro • THU: Rotating shows: Ladonna's • FRI: Retro music • SAT: The Weakest Link game, second and last Thursday with DJ Jazzy • FRI: **Upstairs:** Euro Blitz: New European music with DJ Outtafunk, DJ Jazzy and male stripper • **Downstairs:** female stripper • SAT: Every Sat like new years: **Upstairs:** Monthly theme parties with DJ Jazzy, new music with DJ Dan and Mike • **Downstairs:** Retro music • SUN: Betty Ford Hangover Clinic Show Beer Bash; every long weekend with DJ Jazzy • Tue-Thu \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member); Fri-Sat \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member); Sun \$2

TRANSEXUAL/TRANS/TRANSUPPORT GROUP egret@hotmail.com • Meetings every fourth Tuesday of the month • Information and mutual support for transgendered people in an open, friendly and safe environment. Open to transsexuals, transvestites, cross-dressers, drag queens/kings

WOODYS 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Sun-Thru 1-12; Fri Sat 1-3 • Gay nightclub. Every Sun-Tue (7-12am): Karaoke with Tizzy. Every Wed: game show. Every Fri: free pool. Every weekend: open stage, dance with DJ Arrow Chaser • No membership needed

YOUTH UNDERSTANDING YOUTH Gay and Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton (GLCCE), 45, 9912-106 St (488-3234) • www.youth.tribed.com/yuy • Every Sat (7-9pm) • A facilitated social/support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, straight and questioning youth under the age of 25

SPECIAL EVENTS

ALBERTA THAI ASSOCIATION 10960-104 St (497-1198) • Thai New Year-Sonkran Gala • Sat, Apr. 10 (5:30pm) • \$15 (youth)/\$35 (adult)

EDMONTON POP CULTURE FAIR Aviation Heritage Centre, 11410 Kingsway Ave (487-3195) • Pop culture memorabilia, collectibles, relating to music, sports, movies, radio, television, comic art • Sun, Apr. 18 (10am-4pm) • \$3 (adult)/free (kids 10 and under)

EDMONTON PUBLIC LIBRARY Parkade under the Stanley A. Milner Library (496-1856) • Spring book sale • Apr. 17 (9am-6pm), Apr. 18 (1-5pm)

LAW DAY Law Courts Building, 1A Sir Winston Churchill Sq (427-5913) • Talks, tours, displays, and mock trials presented by the Canadian Bar Association and the Edmonton legal community • Sat, Apr. 17 (10am-4pm) • Free

MYLES THE HYPO-ALLERGIC SUPERHERO Horizon Stage, 1001 Calahoo Rd, Spruce Grove (962-8995/451-8000) • A puppet show that teaches kids about allergies. Created by and starring Bridget Ryan (*The Big Breakfast*) and Annie Duggan • Sat, Apr. 17 (2pm); free pre-show activities at 1pm • \$8/\$20 (family Matinee Series) • Tickets available at the door, by phone at 962-8995, Horizon Stage box office, TicketMaster

NIGHT OF ARTISTS (420-1757) • **Red Engine** **Gala-art and fashion show:** Westin Hotel, 1035-101 St, Apr. 16 (6pm); \$100 (each)/\$600 (table of 8); tickets available at TIX on the Square • **Arts sale/show and cocktail party:** Westin • Apr. 1035-101 St; musical entertainment by Craig Schaefer, Wendy McNeill, Dale Ladouceur and Masacote; Sat, Apr. 17; \$25 (adv)/\$30 (door), tickets available at TIX on the Square • **Roots Café:** Westin Hotel, 1035-101 St; featuring Anna Somerville, Karla Anderson, Terry McKade, Pterian Spring; Apr. 18 (2-5pm); \$12 (adv)/\$15 (door); tickets available at TIX on the Square

OUTDOOR WAY OF THE CROSS Inner city, ending at Sacred Heart School, 96 St, 108 Ave (466-6327/423-9675) • Cultivating just peace, prayer walk through the inner city • Fri, Apr. 9 (10am-noon)

REMEMBERING RWANDA (903-1878) • Apr. 8-10 • Centre Saint-Jean, Faculte Saint-Jean, 8406 Rue Marie Anne Gaboury 91 St • **Rwanda: 10 Years Later/La Rwanda 10 Ans Plus** Tard film and panel discussion with Francois Papeau and Marie-Rose Bukuba; Apr. 7 (7pm) • **Rwandan Arts and Cultural Exhibition, (1-4pm): The 1994 Genocide**, talk by Esther Mujawayo-Kainer, (4pm): Apr. 9 • **Rwanda and the 1994 Genocide**, round table with panelists Frederic Boly, Anne Boerger, David Gao, Nathalie Kermol, Lama Mugabo; Apr. 10 (1-4pm)

SALSA/REGGAE PARTY Donna at the Citadel, 1077-99 St (996-2750/497-4710) • Salsa and the City • Sat, Apr. 10



free will astrology

By ROB BREZSNY



ARIES Mar 21 - Apr 18

If forced to decide between having a bigger penis and living in a world where there was no war, 90 per cent of men would pick universal peace. So says a poll conducted by *Glamour* magazine and *MensHealth.com*. I predict that fate will soon ask you, Aries, to choose between two possibilities that also seem to represent a showdown between self-aggrandizement and altruism. If you play your wild cards right, however, you may not have to pick one at the expense of the other. According to my reading of the astrological omens, you can have both.



TAURUS Apr 20 - May 20

"We are attracted to people who express the qualities we deny or repress in ourselves," says creativity expert Shakti Gawain. Using this idea as your hypothesis, Taurus, take an inventory of the people you're most drawn to. Ask yourself whether they have talents and dreams that you secretly wish could come fully alive in you. If you find this to be the case, consider the possibility that it's time to transform your secret wishes into definite plans.



GEMINI May 21 - June 20

Seeing as how you're at the peak of your popularity and in the harvest phase of your yearly cycle, why not suggest to your friends that they organize a celebration in your honour? A parade could launch the festivities, with your riding in a red Cadillac convertible followed by floats depicting the turning points in your life. When you arrive at the banquet hall, you'll be carried on a litter to a throne. You'll eat a gourmet dinner featuring your favourite food while a series of allies comes to the microphone to describe what they like most about you. To conclude the party, a band will play a set of songs written especially for you. These are merely suggestions, Gemini. You may have different ideas about how you'd like to be glorified. Just make sure you communicate them clearly to the proper people.



CANCER June 21 - July 22

I'm a direct descendant of Genghis Khan (1162-1227), the Mongol leader who controlled an empire stretching from Hungary to Korea. The funny thing is, you might be one of his progeny too. Geneticists have determined that there are millions of us worldwide, owing to our forefather's prolific sowing of wild oats over an extensive area. Of course it's natural if we have mixed feelings about him: he and his troops did all the nasty things a conquering army usually does. But he was also a good manager who codified laws, advanced religious freedom and promoted ethnic diversity. Even if Khan isn't officially your ancestor, Cancerian, you're now primed to imitate his more enlightened side. As you expand your territory and authority, fantasize about the ways your new clout will allow you to give greater gifts.



LEO July 23 - Aug 22

I never take drugs. If I were a Leo, however, I might travel to Britain this week and smoke some pot. (Possession of the stuff in small amounts is no longer illegal there.) If that's impossible for you, find other ways to gently blow your mind. Go on a three-day meditation retreat, make love for six consecutive hours and read the poetry of Mary Oliver while swinging on a swing. Or make atonement to a person you once wronged, assume that everything you think you know is only half-right, and give away money to someone in need. Or all of the above.



VRGO Aug 23 - Sept 22

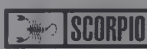
The Indian activist Gandhi led many peaceful rebellions against oppressive governments, first in South Africa and later in British-controlled India. At first he called his strategy "passive resistance," but later disavowed that term because it had negative implications. He ultimately chose the Sanskrit word *satyagraha*, meaning "love force" or "truth force." "Truth [*satya*] implies love," he said, "and firmness [*agraha*] is a synonym for force. *Satyagraha* is thus the force which is born of truth and love." According to my reading of the astrological omens, Virgo, *satyagraha* should be your word of power in the coming weeks. Your uprising against the forces of darkness has got to do more than say "no." A fierce, primal yes should be at the heart of your crusade.



LIBRA Sept 23 - Oct 22

By 2005, you'll be enrolled in a new School of Life, beginning a fresh course of study that will delight the innocent, open-hearted kid in you. But much of

2004 will be like taking a long final exam based on material you've studied forever. On some days the test questions may bore you into a stupor, while on others they may electrify you into a state of red alert. Here's a clue that could help you keep those extreme states to a minimum in the coming months, as well as ensure that you'll ace the exam: leave your normal routine and get away from it all as often as is practical. While you wander in the great unknown, you're likely to attract the exact experiences you'll need to solve the toughest riddles.



SCORPIO Oct 23 - Nov 21

Let's do a check-in, Scorpio. What progress have you been making in your work on this year's biggest opportunity? As I suggested last December, 2004 will be an excellent time to build the kind of network you've always wanted. New alliances will be yours for the asking. Existing collaborators will be extra receptive to deepening your connections. You'll tend to get lucky whenever you try to interest people in helping you express your talents for the good of all. If you've been lagging behind in cashing in on this trend, step up your efforts immediately. You now have the power to make up for lost time.



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22 - Dec 21

April is Feedback Month. In the coming weeks, everyone from your best friend to the janitor at work may barrage you with hints of what they think about you. A few of the reports will be fairly accurate representations of you, while others may resemble the reflections you get from funhouse mirrors. If you just relax your ego muscles and watch the mad rush of images as you would a comic movie, however, the overall experience will be rejuvenating.



CAPRICORN Dec 22 - Jan 18

"Free will is there for the taking, like wild blueberries," writes poet Ellen Doré Watson, "a trifle more sour than we remember." In other words, Capricorn, your mouth might pucker and your eyes may squint when you first sample the ripe crop of free will that you'll come upon this week. But once you've experienced the sensation for a while, it'll start tasting sweeter. By this time next week, you'll be amazed at how delicious it is.



AQUARIUS Jan 19 - Feb 18

In my astrological opinion, you now have a sacred duty to cause good trouble. Please carry out at least two kinds of benevolent mischief from the following list. (1) Break taboos that serve no useful purpose. (2) Circumvent rules that are rotten or harmful. (3) Expose the manipulators who are trying to get everyone to buy into their delusions. (4) Trick people into rebelling against influences that are bad for them. (5) If you see friends or loved ones who are running on autopilot, give them lessons on how to wake up.



PISCES Feb 19 - Mar 20

Piscean actress Mercedes Ruehl won the Golden Globe Award for Best Supporting Actress for her role in the 1991 movie *The Fisher King*. Taking the stage at the awards ceremony, she exclaimed, "I shall never waitress again, and you are my witnesses!" She was almost 43 years old at the time. I foresee a comparable breakthrough for you in the coming months, Pisces. It may not be quite as dramatic as Ruehl's, but it will definitely free you forever from a task that has stifled or demeaned your spirit. And you can lay the groundwork for this victory now. ●

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If you want to place your Classified ad in **Vue Weekly** please phone Carol at 426-1996. Deadline is noon the Tuesday before publication.

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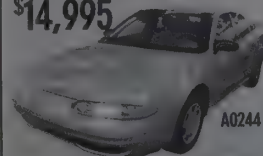


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Calling all Edmontonians for photographs of Edmonton! Edmonton Art Gallery's 100 Years / 100 Pictures exhibition. Deadline: Apr. 16. Info: 422-6223

Call for submissions: 1-year Artist in Residence at Harcourt House Arts Centre. Deadline May 31. Info: 426-4180, harcourt@telusplanet.net

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Calling all artists! The Edmonton Art Gallery/Walter Phillips Gallery calling for Submissions for the 2005 Alberta Biennial of Contemporary Art. Info: Ph 422-6223

ANNUAL SPIRITUAL POETRY CONTEST Theme Writing Toward The Light. Adult/Youth. Deadline: Apr. 26. Ph (403) 210-2807 http://www.spiritualdirections.com

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alt sex column

By ANDREA NEMERSON

High-stakes poker

Dear Andrea:

Lately my boyfriend has taken up grabbing me inappropriately in public. I've never had a problem with that at home, but this constant grabbing in public bothers me a lot and I've told him as much. He seemed to think I was overreacting and is certain I'm mad at him for "something else." I just don't like having my rear grabbed—or worse, nipples pinched—in the gym or grocery stores.

Am I overreacting? This is my first real relationship. I don't know if I'm just too much of a prude, but it seems to me that if I ask him to stop doing something, he really needs to respect my wishes. Should I press the matter, or should I just get that stick out of my ass?

Love, Love Bites (Just Not in Public, Please)

Dear Bites:

If you happened to have a stick up your ass, and you happened to remove it, I can think of a likely place to insert it next, can't you?

I don't really think his behaviour merits any sort of violent retaliation, but you got it right the first time: if you ask him to stop doing some sex thing to you, he needs to stop—period. Your relative inexperience and self-described rectal rod-bearing have nothing to do with it. I doubt you're being a prude, anyway, and I'm quite convinced that he's being a jerk.

On second reading, the gaucherie of his behaviour and the assholery of ignoring your requests that he stop doing it pale before the really irritating part: his insistence that you're "mad at him for something else." This is one of the greatest sins against good couples communication—he's saying, in short, that he knows you better than you know yourself, and handily burying your complaint in the process. Now it's no longer about your objections to his behaviour; it's about you and your hidden resentments and how you're incapable of communicating what you really mean.... Oh, ugh. I'm getting irritated just thinking about it. I imagine by now you are mad at him for something else.

You'll have to sit him down, quite apart from any new nipple-grabbing incidents, and subject him to yet another tedious processing session. Explain

once again that you, although by no means only you, do not enjoy being prodded and poked in public. Let's hope he realizes the error of his ways soon, since if he can't change now, he sure as hell isn't going to start later.

Love, Andrea

Controlling interest

Dear Andrea:

I'm a 22-year-old male and my fiancée of five years is 21. When we first started dating she was seeing another girl who was very controlling, told her what to wear and how to act.

Our sex life has fallen into a boring same-old same-old. I find myself begging for sex. She never tells me what she wants. She lies there as I poke and rub and depending on the noises she makes I know if it's good or bad. It's like a game where I have to guess the combination before she gets uninterested. She loves things at first and can't get enough, but soon she's back to the lying there. I've talked about all this and she overreacted once by saying, "Fine! we just won't have sex again!" Lately she says she's sorry and will try and change, which just makes me feel bad because I feel like I'm the controlling type, like her last relationship.

Love, Codebreaker

Dear Breaker:

I usually consider introductions like yours to be mere column clutter and I chop them off. In your case, though, I had to keep it, reread it and count backwards on my fingers to make sure I'd seen what I thought I'd seen: You've been engaged five years and she's 21, so her controlling lesbian relationship took place when she was 16? I was about to write, "Dude, that's fucked up," when I realized that most teenage girls are involved in (not necessarily sexual) relationships with other girls who tell them what to wear and how to act. Most of those who escape such treatment do so by being the ones who inflict it. There is simply no inference of anything to be drawn from her having allowed herself to be bullied and bossed by other 16-year-old girls. None. Let it go.

You must also let go of your belief that any of this has anything to do with you. There is something going on with her, and I'm no more interested in playing guessing games about her than you are, so we'll have to leave it at that. If it's within her ability to change and become more communicative, great. That is, once again, about her, not you. Let her change. It's not like you're telling her she'd better go out for cheerleading or else.

Love, Andrea

Andrea Nemerson writes and teaches in San Francisco. You can e-mail her a question at andrea@altsexcolumn.com.

volunteers

Cerebral Palsy Association: Sat, May 15; show your support by taking part in the CP 100 Bike-a-Thon. 1-800-363-2807 or www.cpalberta.com.

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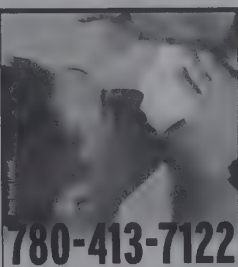
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[BY DAVE JOHNSTON • 20]

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LONG LIVE THE PIXIES

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ON THE COVER

Soft, loud, soft, loud. It seems like such a simple recipe for exciting music, but it was the Pixies who perfected it... and then broke up just in time to watch dozens of other bands rip off their formula and ride it into the financial stratosphere. Now that the Pixies have made one of the most improbable reunions in rock history, *Vue's* Dave Johnston assesses their legacy • 20

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The Martin chronicles

Waiting for Martin "star" David Bernans on his quest for an audience with the PM

By SHERYLE CARLSON

Canadians following the current sponsorship scandal who are surprised to learn that dirty politics exists in Canada would do well to check out Magnus Isacson and Sophia Southam's new documentary, *Waiting for Martin*.

"When you watch the film, you

kind of get this idea that I'm obsessed with Paul Martin," says political

PREVIEW DOCUMENTARY

activist David Bernans, the "star" of the film, over the phone as he puts

his son to bed. "But that's not true. I'm not obsessed with Paul Martin. He's just a convenient symbol."

Strongly influenced by cheeky left-wing documentaries like Michael Rubbo's *Waiting for Fidel* and Michael

SEE PAGE 7

Smilin' Jay's
Double Date

with
Black Market Inc.

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and after broadcast band
Cassidy

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April 17, 2004
from 10:30 pm to midnight



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Issue Number 443

April 15-21, 2004

available at over 1,400 locations

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Biofreedom group
warns Edmonton
of dangers of
genetically
modified food

By CHRIS BOUTET

The world of genetically modified organisms is a difficult one to explore. Sure, most of us know that GMOs exist, but this is usually where our general knowledge ends and the questions begin. While making canola seed resistant to pesticides purportedly produces higher yields, what could it be doing to the environment? While tampering with strawberry genes may be beneficial for the food's shelf life, what could it be doing to our bodies? According to people like Trevor King of the Edmonton-based GMO awareness group Biofreedom, the thought that these products have been released out of the lab before these questions could be answered is a frightening one indeed.

"To me, it's shocking that these things have been released out of the lab and into the ecosystem without enough research," says King, whose group will be screening the documentary *Deconstructing Supper* next Thursday at Metro Cinema in an effort to bring these issues into the public eye. "I mean, DNA is a very, very complex thing, and for someone to bash a couple of genes together because a fish gene would work well in a strawberry to keep it from freezing—it's a good idea if it works and if the long-term ramifications are understood. But just the fact that strawberry doesn't freeze doesn't mean that all the effects are understood."

BIOFREEDOM IS A volunteer-based organization that believes that genetically engineered (GE) crops and

products have been introduced into Canadian markets without adequate testing. The group feels that this may be putting the health of all Canadians at risk and could put our country's farmers in a sticky financial situation should foreign markets continue to refuse the importation of GE products. As such, Biofreedom is calling on the government of Canada to implement a moratorium on all GE crops until such time as sufficient long-term scientific tests have proven without doubt that GMOs are safe. The group is also seeking a mandatory labeling system for any products that contain GE crops.

According to King, the problem with GMOs is not that there is an absence of research being conducted on their potential effects; rather, it's that the only research being accepted is that which is done by the biotech companies themselves, while outside studies are summarily discarded.

"The one thing that disturbs me more than anything," says King, "is that almost all of the science is done by the industry itself. Whenever Health Canada or the Food and Drug Administration approves something, it's based on this research, and they just accept it at face value without really knowing from independent research what negative effects it could have."

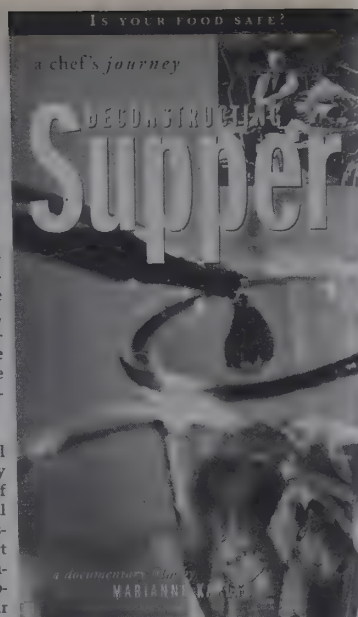
An even larger problem, King adds, is that all too often, scientists who do decide to publish independent studies on biotechnology quickly find themselves in the unemployment line. King points to the cases of Jane Akre of Fox News and Árpád Pusztai, formerly of the Rowett Institute in the U.K. as examples of this. In 1997, Akre and her husband began researching the effects of rBGH, a genetically altered growth hormone produced by Monsanto that was intended to induce higher milk production in cows. But once they compiled their data into a story for Fox News, they were fired for their troubles.

Same thing with Pusztai, King continues. In 1998 he conducted a study on the effects of genetically engineered potatoes on lab rats; over time, the rats were developing inflamed organs, brain issues, inflamed testicles—so he decided to publish his results and come forward. But when he did, he got booted from the institute.... All of a sudden he was a nutjob, whereas one week before he was a celebrated scientist."

ACCORDING TO KING, all the vagueness and secrecy that surrounds the issue of GMOs is actually beneficial to the biotechnology industry. King feels that the fact that companies like Monsanto refuse to show up to public debates regarding their products and adamantly oppose any sort of labeling on food products indicates a belief that the less people know about the specifics of genetic engineering, the better. The issue of labeling (or lack thereof) is one that particularly frustrates King.

"The things that the Canadian public should be most outraged about," he says, "is the fact that genetically engineered crops and GMOs have already been released, and there currently exists no mandatory labeling laws to ensure that the consumers knows what they're buying. I mean, if they're so proud of this and so confident that it's not a bad thing, then why won't they stand up for it?"

"Then you have stores here like Superstore, which is owned by Loblaws," he continues. "They sent out letters to suppliers of organic products that had 'GE free' or 'GMO free' labeling on the packaging, saying that they had to take this claim off their product or the store would pull their products off the shelves or start marketing the claim out. I



think it should be the other way around, obviously, and consumers should be applying pressure so that they start to meet our wishes. Because I know I would really prefer to make that choice rather than have someone else make it for me."

But in order to facilitate this kind of change, the general public needs to inform itself as to the issues of genetically engineered foods, and King feels that attending the screening of *Deconstructing Supper* is as good a start as any. "The thing I like about it is that it's not done through a scientist's eyes, it's done through the eyes of a chef, and the film lets the audience make up their own mind about the information it presents," he says. "But I hope that people who see this movie are really afraid, and I hope that people get active about it," he says. "Everybody eats; this affects all of us." ●

Deconstructing Supper screens Thursday, April 22 at 6:30 p.m. at Metro Cinema (Zeidler Hall, The Citadel).

Supper rush

In the first few minutes of the anti-GMO documentary *Deconstructing Supper*, a waiter (who is almost certainly not moonlighting to support an acting career) approaches chef and Vancouver restaurateur John Bishop in his restaurant's kitchen and says that some customers are asking if he uses any genetically modified foods in his meals. Bishop sheepishly admits in the voiceover he doesn't even know what GMOs are, and, showing an unusual amount of curiosity, conviction and spare time, he embarks on a journey that takes him from Canada to Great Britain and India, all to find out the truth about the elusive GMO. Whether or not Bishop was successful in his quest is largely debatable, and the film itself has a few faults, but at the very least, *Deconstructing Supper* is a serviceable introduction into the motives and the need for the biochemical engineering of foods.

Along his way, Bishop meets with organic vegetable farmers, anti-GMO activists, and a few gene technology pundits in an effort to get the dirt on genetically modified foods. Soon, he discovers the overwhelming opposition to the technology among

farmers in Canada, England and India, all of whom feel that GE wheat, canola and corn seeds are a needless technologization (that's a word, right?) of a process that farmers have been doing themselves for years by saving seeds and crossbreeding certain plants to display certain traits.

Most of the farmers Bishop talks to (among them Percy Schmeiser, the Saskatchewan farmer currently embroiled in a legal battle against Monsanto, a GE company whose engineered canola seed wound up in Schmeiser's organic fields without the farmer's knowledge) feel that genetically modifying seeds has no real benefit compared to traditional plant breeding, save that it allows companies like Monsanto to own and control the seed market. In India, Bishop meets with eco-activist Vanada Shiva, who explains that GE seeds are touted for their higher yields, but come at the expense of loss of field biodiversity and soil depletion. These arguments are clear and convincing, and will prove to be the heart of the film for the casual moviegoer. But that said, the film sports a few flaws that tend to detract from its achievements.

For one, being a chef, the criteria with which Bishop chooses to evaluate organic versus GE foods

is, well, how they taste when cooked. This isn't necessarily a bad idea in itself, but it's clear that the test material in this evaluation is a little weighted in favour of organics. For the organic meals, Bishop uses only fresh vegetables straight from the garden, creating delicious-looking culinary delights that would make anyone's mouth water. But when he makes a meal with GE foods, what does he pick to represent the other side? A bag of crappy potatoes from a supermarket and a can of generic cream of chicken soup that apparently has GE corn starch in it. I'm sure that even the best chef in the world would have difficulty in making a fine meal out of Western Family soup, and unsurprisingly, Bishop is not impressed with the results. Perhaps the use of some equally fresh examples would have made his point a little easier to swallow.

Still, despite this bias and a general propensity on behalf of the director to assume the audience knows more about the subject matter than they likely would, *Deconstructing Supper* is ultimately an approachable and useful primer on the world of GMOs. Could it have used a little more depth? Oh, probably. But come on, people: that's what books are for. —CHRIS BOUTET



vue
news

ANIMALS

Movin' and Howard

EDMONTON—After nearly a year of being subject to campaigns and petitions by animal rights groups all over North America, it looks like West Edmonton Mall may finally be freeing Howard the Dolphin from the mall's indoor aquarium.

Howard is the last remaining of a group of four dolphins—Howard, Gary, Mavis and Maria—that were captured and brought to the mall from Florida in 1985. After years of frolicking and cavorting for the mild amusement of mall spectators, Maria died in 2000, followed by Gary in 2001. Once Howard's mate Mavis died last July, Canadian activist groups such as Zoocheck Canada began a comprehensive campaign which included the distribution of all those Free Howard signs you see everywhere (and no, despite what you find when you type "free Howard" into Google, they have nothing to do with that idiot Howard Stern finally being dropped like a sack of dead raccoons by Clear Channel) to ensure that Howard would not meet the same fate.

Apparently, the campaign has worked as, according to reports from the CBC, Howard may be headed for the bluer pastures of Florida. WEM has confirmed that Florida Keys marine park Theater of the Sea has applied for a permit to move the decidedly-not-a-shock-radio-host Howard. The mall has promised to move the dolphin as soon as he is healthy enough to do so. "Is he better there than in Canada, in a shopping mall? Yes, probably," Ric O'Barry, who used to train dolphins and works to keep them out of captivity, said in an interview with CBC. "It's the best of a bad idea. He's in natural sea water, sunshine, and he's with other dolphins. In a perfect world, he would go back to the Pine Island, Florida area where he was captured and be reunited with his family and swim off into the sunset, but we don't live in a perfect world."

Don't we all dream of a world in which dolphins swim around in the same place for 19 years? I know I do, except my perfect world is also one in which Howard Stern is covered in fire ants, tied to the nose of a rocket and launched into the sun. —CHRIS BOUTET

PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS

Rural Albertans want healthcare, not big government: poll

EDMONTON—The federal government has just released a study on the priorities of rural Albertans—and surprise, surprise, it found that access to quality healthcare is important to Wild Rose province residents living outside of Edmonton and Calgary, but that big

government is not a large priority.

In a study released last week by the Canadian Rural Partnership, a government agency created to investigate and define the priorities of the agricultural sector, more than 400 rural Albertans were asked to rank 13 previously determined priorities, from quality healthcare to access to technology to government programs. It found that 82 per cent ranked "accessible quality healthcare" as a five out of five on the priority scale, while another 13 per cent ranked it four out of five. Strong community leadership was the second-highest priority, with a five-star ranking from 74 per cent of the people polled and a four-star rating from another 21 per cent of the study group.

Finishing well down the list was access to technology and high-tech training—access to high-speed Internet only garnered high importance from 42 per cent of respondents. In fact, only 52 per cent of those polled even had Internet-capable computers in their homes. "Most of the 48 per cent respondents without Internet access at home indicated that their main reason for not having this service was not having a computer (27 per cent)," stated the study. "About 20 per cent of respondents reported that the service was not affordable, that they chose not to have access or that they did not know how to use this technology."

On the other end of the spectrum, "access to government programs" was rated as the second-least important issue to respondents. Only half of the people surveyed believed that government help was important, further confirming rural Alberta as the big-C conservative capital of the country. The study also found that respondents felt that it was more important for government to promote rural Alberta and its products rather than spend money on bringing high-tech training or try to promote new business ideas in the area. Basically, the mood of the study is that

the rural way of life doesn't need to be updated—what it needs is a better marketing strategy.

Why such disdain for opening new markets? The study suggests that funding is not easy to come by in rural Alberta. Of the rural residents surveyed who had actually begun new businesses, the study found that 85 per cent got their funding through personal investment. Less than two-thirds used bank funds, while only one in five claimed to use government grants or funding plans. So, government is in a Catch-22 situation. Rural Alberta does not want to diversify, mainly because of a lack of government funding. But the poll shows that these people really aren't that comfortable with the idea of government funding in the first place. Rural Alberta is a place that can't diversify because the population refuses to divorce itself from the aid-less, subsidy-less free market.

Why is this study so important? Because rural Alberta has such a disproportionately large percentage of the seats in the provincial legislature, the study illustrates the core values that will be the focus of debate in the next election campaign. But to be fair, it needs to be mentioned that while the study was released just last week, the actual poll was conducted in 2002. That means many of the farmers surveyed were answering questions about government aid before the zenith of the drought crisis or the discovery of Mad Cow Disease in Alberta. The feds and the province have launched several aid programs in the wake of those disasters, so the numbers from a 2002 study need to be taken with a very large grain of salt. —STEVEN SANDOR

MILITARY

Sea King havoc

OTTAWA—Ah, the proud, proud Sea King, the ancient Canadian military helicopter that is so outdated and dan-

gerous that pilots have to be trained how to fly on one engine and how to not die when the copter inevitably loses power and crashes into the sea. There once was a time when we all feared we would be losing these nostalgic throwbacks to 1963 within the next four years. But fear not: according to documents recently obtained by CBC, it looks like the Sea Kings may be forced to remain in service until 2012.

Despite Defence Minister David Pratt's recent assurances to New Democratic MP Alexa McDonough that the sorely strained helicopters will be relieved of duty by 2008, CBC is reporting that papers gathered under the Access to Information Act indicate that the military is considering keeping the Sea Kings flying (and crashing) until one year short of the choppers' 50th birthday.

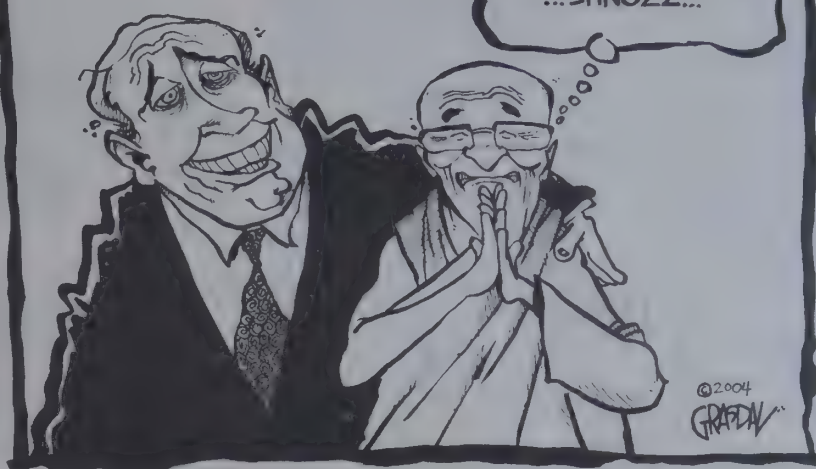
"You have to look at the number of years it takes to get full delivery of all aircraft," said Col. François Pion, who oversees the Sea King life extension project, in an interview with CBC. "And then on top of that, you have to look at how long it's going to take to train your personnel, be it maintenance personnel or aircrew, and how long it's going to take them to actually come up to speed and become operational on the new aircraft."

All these factors mean a few more years of extra service for the Sea King, which will further require millions of dollars in upgrades just to maintain their current slightly-less-deadly-than-trying-to-fly-a-car-by-driving-it-really-fast-off-a-building status.

According to the CBC, the Liberals cancelled an earlier order to replace the aircraft in 1993, back when the Sea King was but a spry young pup of 30, but a contract for a new machine is expected to be announced later this month.

After its retirement, reports allege, the Sea King plans to buy a house in Crowsnest Pass and spend the day yelling at kids to stay off his lawn. —CHRIS BOUTET

PAUL MARTIN MEETS THE DALAI LAMA



vue
point

BY CHRIS BOUTET

Vue is chosen

Five and a half years after everyone's favourite migrant from the *Maritimes* swept through the pages of this publication like a brisk nor'easter made of integrity and wit, Dan Rubinstein has left *Vue* to become the associate editor of *Alberta Views*. And, incredibly, I somehow ended up taking his place as news editor.

Although Dan would like you to think that his leaving was by choice, I feel obliged to tell you all the truth: like every other current editor here at *Vue*, I won my position by besting my predecessor in a Kirk-versus-Spock-style gladiator match, complete with tridents, nets and torn spandex uniforms. Dan's understandably a little embarrassed about it, so you probably shouldn't mention it to him the next time you run into him. He'll just deny it. But we both know what really happened.

Mr. Rubinstein never ceased to amaze me with his creativity and dedication to this job, and the thought that I now have to fill his presumably-size-eight shoes is one that is simultaneously exhilarating and nerve-wracking. But hey—I'll try my best, because I believe too strongly in the tenets and mandate of this here paper to do any less.

Of course, it wasn't always this way for me. Two summers ago, when I erroneously thought I was done for good at the U of A's student newspaper, the *Gateway*, I decided that it was high time I started writing for a weekly. Back then, I didn't really see any difference between *See* and *Vue*. So I made up two portfolios and went to *Vue* first, because it was closest to my apartment at the time. It was a decision I've never regretted.

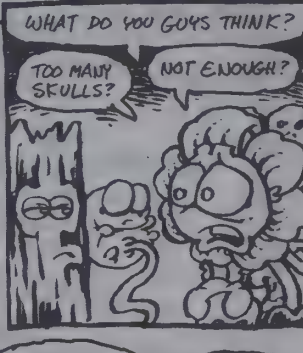
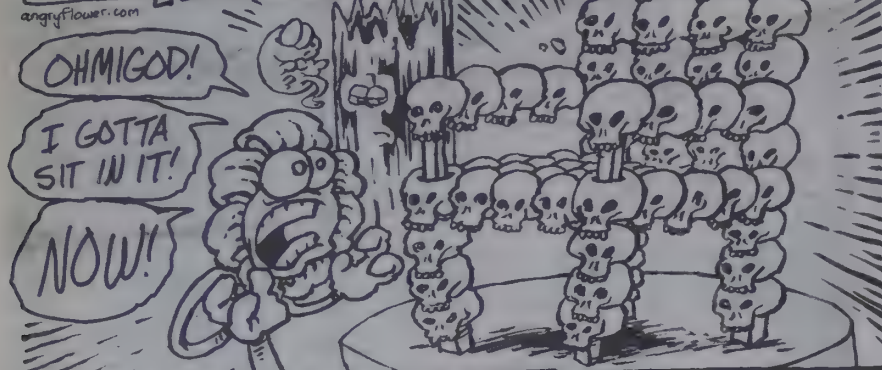
Just as Dan wrote in this space last week, after meeting *Vue* publisher Ron Garth, who explained to me the importance of this publication's independence and its struggles against the corporate-owned other guys, I began to understand just what this publication stands for. I truly feel that *Vue*'s news section is a prime example of the freedom and possibility the alternative press holds. This is a forum for the unfettered expression of ideas, a place where you can find all the news you can't get anywhere else in the Edmonton community. This is the truly independent media, and I look forward to playing a larger role in it.

So yeah. My e-mail and phone number are in the masthead on page four. If you've got a story to tell or you think we're missing something, drop me a line. Together, we can ensure that *Vue* will continue to be what it has always been: a bastion of independent, alternative media that's really close to my old apartment. ☺

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TRYING OUT THE SKULL CHAIR



Haiku Horoscope

ARIES

(Mar 21-Apr 19)

Hey, things could be worse
The horse that trampled on you
Could have been ugly



LIBRA

(Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

Cows are stupid, but
Somehow they will find a way
To ruin your life



TALON

(April 20-May 20)

Those lucky cats will
Bring you fortune at the cost
Of your home's decor



SCORPIO

(Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

That corset will make
People notice your figure
As you choke to death



GEMINI

(May 21-June 20)

You will become a
Hero to castrated men
Everywhere this week



SAGITTARIUS

(Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

You've tried Tantric sex
Now try ice cream with pickles
Hold on for the ride



CANCER

(June 21-July 22)

Invest in JECO
That's Jon's Evil Criminal
Organization



CAPRICORN

(Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

Marilyn Manson
Has come up with another
New way to hate you



LEO

(July 23-Aug. 22)

Some stocks fall, but at
JECO our stocks just cannot
Get any lower



AQUARIUS

(Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

Don't let the "Man" stop
You from doing what you love:
Obeying the rules



VIRGO

(Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

Sometimes you have to
Fight dirty, and other times
It is just more fun



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Anything, but it's never
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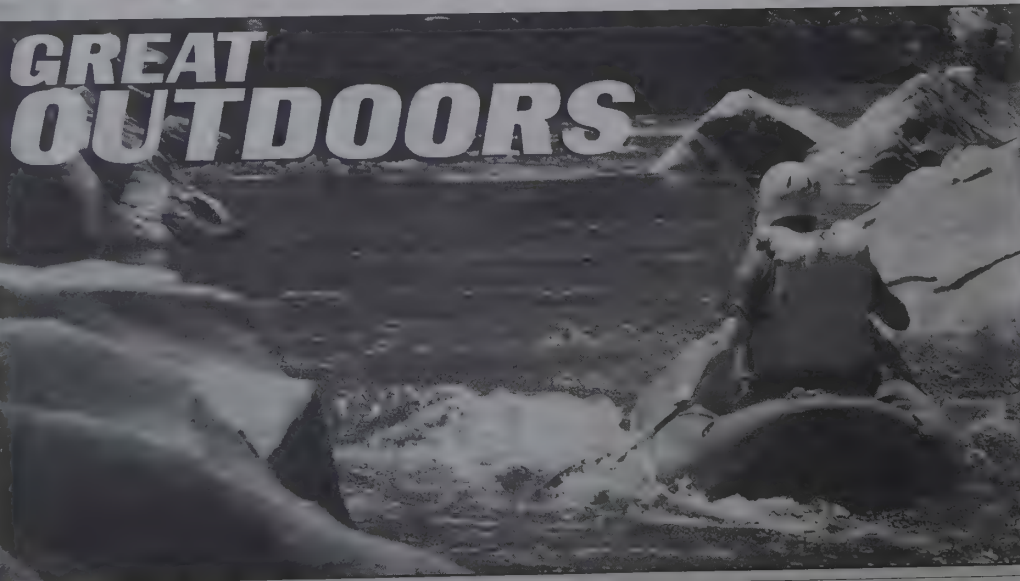
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Waiting for Martin

Continued from page 2

Moore's *Roger and Me*, independent filmmaker Magnus Isacson (*Emperor's New Clothes*, *View from the Summit*) and animator Sophia Southam follow Bernans on his mission to personally question Paul Martin's political accountability and track record as a CEO. For three years Bernans has attempted to meet Martin, attending press conferences, running against him as a NDP candidate in Martin's riding and using a little good ol' shit-disturbing activism to attract attention to his mission.

"In the beginning," Bernans explains, "Isacson was planning on doing a film about Paul Martin coming to Concordia University in the fall of 2000 for a public accountability session. But he cancelled, so the idea for

in Canada by 2000, but instead sat idly by as child poverty rose and the gap between the rich and the poor widened. "These are direct results of his policies," Bernans says, "and if you follow these policies—cutting taxes for the rich and cutting programs that help the poor—you have a growing gap. It's not rocket science. This is Paul Martin."

ULTIMATELY, Bernans (who currently works as a writer for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and rabble.ca) doesn't actually get to meet Martin and modestly calls his efforts "only a drop in the bucket." However, he's amazed by the strong public reaction to *Waiting for Martin*. "The film," he says, "is providing inspiration and motivation for people to get involved that can affect the outcome of the election itself, but it's not like a mass propaganda tour." Funding has come

"These are direct results of his policies," Bernans says.

"It's not rocket science. This is Paul Martin."

the film was gone. At that point, the election had been called and the NDP had been talking to me about running in Martin's riding because I was involved in organizing a protest against giving Martin an honorary degree when I was teaching at Concordia." Bernans, armed with a Ph.D. in political science, decided to approach the problem grassroots-style, staging skits, interacting with Martin supporters and attending media scrums. But his antics had a serious goal in mind.

"To me," Bernans says, "the whole idea of following Paul Martin around is a means to an end of bringing up the cause of corporate influence on government and how powerful the corporate lobby is. (Bernans cites the Business Council on National Issues—now the Canadian Council of CEOs—as a prime example of this phenomenon.) "Whatever party is in power, there are a lot of structural pressures upon them to continue to do what Paul Martin has been doing."

Bernans points out how Martin, when he was finance minister, promised to eliminate child poverty

from unions and public arts grants; a Montreal company, Cinema Libre, is working on the distribution; and a five-minute trailer for the film ran on CBC's *Zed* last week. Bernans also hopes to do another tour, once Martin stops delaying and calls an election.

Which begs the question: what does Bernans think will happen when Canadians finally go to the polls? "My sense," he says, "is that there is quite a possibility for a minority government. There have been a few minority governments in Canadian history and they've quite often been a way to get through some progressive legislation such as the NDP and Liberal minority government of the early '70s under Trudeau. That, to me, would be an interesting possibility."

And with current Ipsos-Reid polls putting public Liberal support at only 35 per cent, it could turn out to be more than just a possibility. ●

WAITING FOR MARTIN

Directed by Magnus Isacson and Sophia Southam • Featuring David Bernans • Zeidler Hall, The Citadel • Fri-Sat, Apr 16-17 (7pm) • Metro Cinema • 425-9212

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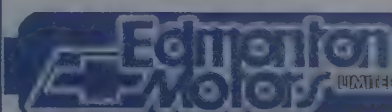
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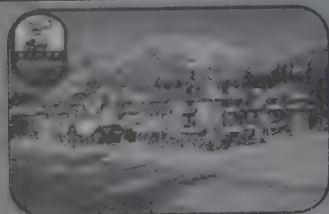


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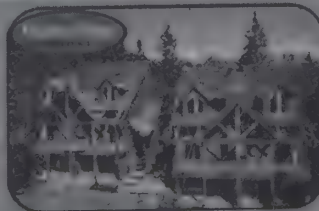
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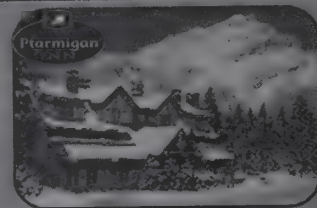
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three dollar bill

By RICHARD BURNETT

The dealmaker

I cancelled my subscription to the world's first all-gay television network, Canada's very own PrideVision, in a fit of exasperation. I was spending eight hard-earned bucks a month for a bunch of lousy reruns and midnight porn interrupted by commercial breaks at the most inopportune moments. You could hear the groans in living rooms right across the Great White North and, honey, they weren't groans of pleasure.

So I trashed PrideVision in this column and pissed off a few folks at the network. PrideVision said they had 22,000 subscribers. When I quit, I wrote, "That's 21,999 and counting."

Recently, bestselling Canadian author Irshad Manji (who headed CHUM's failed competing bid for a CRTC license) told me, "I wish them well but I don't subscribe to that channel [either]. They can call it PrideVision but I don't know where the vision is."

Then the shit really hit the fan. Headline Media Group, which owns PrideVision, laid off most staffers and put the sad-sack station, which has lost \$16 million since its inception in 2001, up for sale.

Fortunately, Canadian white knight Bill Craig arrived in the nick of time. Last December he offered to buy the network for \$2.6 million, which includes the station's \$1.1 million debt-load. The CRTC will likely approve the sale by this June.

So I tracked Bill Craig down in Bermuda (where he is building a wireless cable system) to get his thoughts on queer TV. After all, Craig is a gay man—though he was a married father of two sons until he divorced his supportive wife a decade ago.

Not surprisingly, when Craig offered to buy PrideVision, his sexual orientation and thoughts about gay life escaped the notice of Canada's mainstream press—until now. "This has been a real lesson for me," says Craig, who knows a thing or two about the TV biz after holding programming positions at the CBC, TV Ontario and Rogers Cable, as well as serving as a CRTC senior policy analyst in the 1970s before creating four regional sports networks in the USA and founding the now-defunct iCraveTV.com. The man knows TV, but folks still think he's nuts for buying PrideVision.

"I have tried to get investors to come on board, including out gay people," Craig explains. "Oscar Wilde's phrase 'The love that dare not speak its name' is very profound because [the gay community] is the only minority that the majority thinks you can hide it. And if you don't hide it, that means you're in their face. But if you're black or Chinese or a woman, you can't help that. Tell them that you're gay and they say, 'Why are

you telling me that?' It's not that it's bad—it's just the love that's not allowed to speak for itself. So people in the gay community who have money spend a lot of their capital convincing 90 per cent of the population that they understand the straight market and straight world. So a truce is drawn. This is like the Barry Dillers and David Geffens of the world. They spend their whole day fighting that

was always asked] 'Why did you choose to buy that channel? There are 400 other good channels!'"

Craig believes the key to PrideVision's future success, in addition to fresh original programming, is distribution. "During the free preview period, PrideVision was in the top one or two in all demographics," he says. "It had advertiser support and viewer support. The missing ingredient was distribution. In my mind the channel was corporately gaybashed. The way to kill a channel is to put it in subscription mode. The only [subscription channels] that

work are movie-based. I mean, if you were to charge for Home & Garden you'd be lucky to get 500 subscribers."

Though U.S. giant Viacom fast-tracked the creation of an American gay network last month, Craig (who also has American citizenship) says, "It'll be tough sledding down there. This Janet [Jackson]-Gate is just the tip of the iceberg. In the United States they said, 'Why did she

show one breast?' In Canada we went, 'Why didn't she show both of them?'"

That faith in the Canadian way has Craig looking forward to running PrideVision. "I'm told [my CRTC] chances are very good but I'm still touching wood as I speak," Craig says. "I'm wrapping up my affairs here in Bermuda, then [my partner and I] go sailing in Guadeloupe and then I'll come back to Toronto to manage PrideVision full-time."

Perhaps then I'll renew my subscription. ☺



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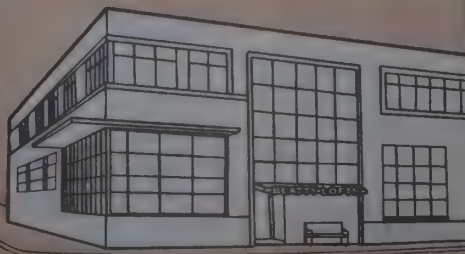


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A multitude of Sims

Assessing the 300-issue, 6,000-page legacy of Dave Sim's *Cerebus*

By STEPHEN NOTLEY

Well, *Cerebus* is done. What's *Cerebus*? It's a comic book named after its main character, a three-foot-tall, sword-wielding aardvark who has now finally battled and schemed and humped and killed and ascended and loved and lost and got old and found God and dissolved into a doddering wreck to the last panel of the 6,000-page 300-issue comic book that makes up his life and 27 years of the life of its creator, longtime Kitchener, Ontario resident Dave Sim.

Holy crap, this is one big comic. The biggest, really—the longest single continuous work by a single creative team in the history of the medium and probably one of the longest books ever written. And it's been a hell of a ride. *Cerebus* began as a short, smart, mouthy funny animal comic, a well-drawn and funny parody of Conan, all about the gags. But, driven by Sim's ferocious impulse for innovation, *Cerebus* swiftly took on a life of its own. Sim is a parodist at heart, and his unique talent is to catch a cartoon

his readers. In issue 26, barbarian *Cerebus* shows up at a hotel and suddenly gets drawn into the world of politics. For fans of swords 'n' sorcery parody comics, this was ridiculous. When was Sim gonna quit all this suits-and-dialogue stuff and get *Cerebus* back to being a barbarian?

PROFILE COMICS

But Sim had other ideas. *Cerebus* became the prime minister. Then he became the pope. And then Sim devoted a whole book to the story of Jaka, the dancer that *Cerebus* loved. Then he looked at the death of Oscar Wilde. And then the second 'huge story arc, "Mothers and Daughters," the monumental wrapping-up of all the mythological plot threads, the meeting with God (that is to say, Dave Sim) and of course the infamous "Female Void and Male Light" prose sequence in "Reads" that established Sim's new reputation, deserved or otherwise, as a hateful misogynist.

And then, having finished the "plot" of *Cerebus*, Sim kept on going. He retreated to a bar and charted men's behaviour in "Guys." He start-

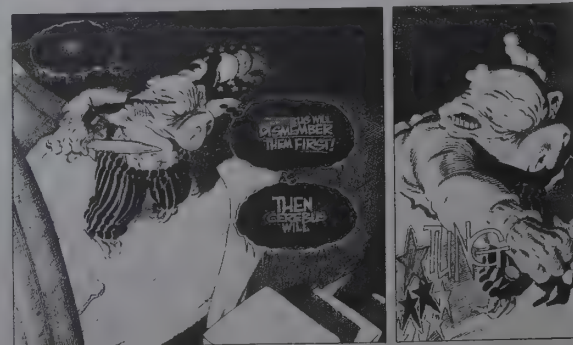
Then, at some point
—it's different for every *Cerebus* reader—
Dave Sim lost his mind.

version of someone (be it Groucho Marx or George Washington or Mick Jagger or Maggie Thatcher or, in the form of the Roach, a unending series of transforming riffs on the superhero du jour, with Roach versions of Batman, Captain America, Moon Knight, Spider-Man, normalman, Punisher, Sandman, Ghost Rider, Cable and dozens of others), sink them into the *Cerebus* world and see what they do. They take on their own identities, personalities, agendas; they blossom as characters in their own right. Soon it became clear that the *Cerebus* universe was alive with interconnections and secrets and astonishing possibilities.

Sim wasn't afraid to challenge

ed mixing gender relations with religious convictions in "Rick's Story." And then he took *Cerebus* on three book-length elaborate style parodies, doing F. Scott Fitzgerald in "Going Home," slamming Ernest Hemingway and then Ernest Hemingway's wife in "Form and Void" and then combining the Three Stooges, Woody Allen and the Bible into one demented three-pack in "Latter Days."

IT'S A BIG BOOK, filled with some of the most stunning and innovative comics ever done. Anchored by his short, mouthy asshole protagonist, Sim experimented, pushed the boundaries, pushed and pulled and hammered the comics medium until it squeaked. One issue would





through 20 pages which, if separated and assembled, formed a huge picture of Cerebus. Another involved slowly rotating panels, forcing you to turn the comic a full 360 degrees as you read it. Way back in the '80s *Cerebus* boasted "cinematic" techniques, tracking and zooming over sequential panels or breaking a large panel into slices in order to convey a motion or transition. In issue #65 Sim turned over the task of drawing backgrounds to fellow Kitchenerite Gerhard, who proceeded to pump out some of the most extraordinarily detailed and beautiful pen-and-ink illustrations ever.

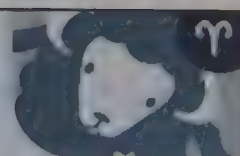
Then, at some point—it's different for every *Cerebus* reader—Dave Sim lost his mind. For some readers, it was when the comic spent four pages on Cerebus taking a leak. For others it was when Cerebus, in his office of pope, raped his longtime ally/enemy Astoria, a comics echo of Sim's first wife. For lots of others it

was when Sim inserted himself into the comic and took pages of text to explain that women are bloodsucking leeches who drain the life and creativity from men. For still others it was when Sim found God and turned the comic into pages and pages of close-typed, line-by-line dissections of Genesis. It was like Sim was daring his readers to quit, a dare more and more readers happily chose to accept.

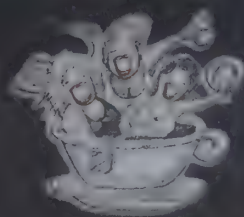
But Sim and Gerhard kept plugging away and now, in issue #300, Cerebus is dead. His life is done and it was an extraordinary life of laughs and gags and rampant assholery and desperate battles and unearthed truths and crazy, doddering side-tracks and ridiculously offensive opinions. His life was a story and, like all stories, it was true. Controversial, offensive, brilliant, and now complete, *Cerebus the Aardvark* stands as one of the most important comics ever written. Plus it has lots of hot chicks in it. ☘



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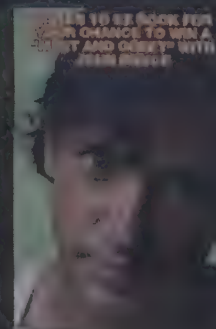
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Mercury astronaut

Poet Daniel Nester takes a bizarre, deeply personal cruise through Queen's discography

By WHITEY HOUSTON



Who hasn't windmilled around their living room at least once in their life screaming "WEEEEEE ARE THE CHAMPIONS, WEEEEEEEEEE ARE THE CHAMPIONS" in a wild-eyed, manic frenzy, all the while pointing mockingly at a friend you've just crucified for the third straight time at Stratego? And who can't shamefacedly admit that they've mashed out air power chords on an air flying V guitar while rocking out to the uptempo section of "Bohemian Rhapsody"? I mean, whether you are/were an impressionable AM radio casualty or a budding audiophile überfan/Mensa poet laureate, everybody knows the music of Queen to some degree. It is inescapable, it permeates all living tissue, it exists in multiple dimensions and it transcends time itself. Or perhaps you think it is bunk!

Either way, I was the former (the AM radio casualty) while author Daniel Nester is quite obviously the latter (the Mensa poet laureate). Nester's obtuse Queen tribute *God Save My Queen*, upon first read, seems more like a bizarre, self-aggrandizing pat on the back than a salute to the band—an infuriating non-read if you're expecting a breezy tell-all or a glorified coffee-table fanzine. Upon closer examination, however, it becomes clear that Nester's book is a complex puzzle and once a few of the pieces are in place, the larger picture reveals itself.

To glean any insight from *God Save My Queen*, you simply can't be a passive reader. DAMN IT! This is challenging shit, so put down that smoothie and pay attention. All of the casual flippers who pawed through my copy of the book had the same "What the fuck is this supposed to be?" reaction. At first I shrugged in agreement, but now I smugly nod. You may not find out why Mercury grew that outrageous Muppet mustache, but you will be enlightened nonetheless. Nester has laid open a cryptic diary and allowed us to peep voyeuristically at

his candid coming-of-age revelations. It's a baffling mix of pontification, trivia and lyrical analysis, all superimposed upon an exhaustive, song-by-song chronology of Queen releases. Nester has drunkenly ridden roughshod over all expectations and you are the duct-taped hostage in his trunk.

THE SECRET to *God Save My Queen* is that Nester invites the reader to join in his own personal experience of the Queen discography. There, the cat's out of the bag. Y'see, by reading about Nester's poetic, song-by-song reflections on Queen's music you can't help but reminisce yourself. So

it's okay that you wanted a striped unitard in Grade 7. And it's alright that you and your friends drunkenly held flashlights under your chins and reduced beautiful Queen arrangements to hamfisted hollering into cellular telephones on precarious rooftops. It's okay that all you hear is backward-masked religious fervour whenever you listen to "Another One Bites the Dust." Nester goes so much farther and lays so much more on the line that even your most ribald memories will seem pedestrian by comparison. Oh Really? Yes, really! Here, for instance, is his entry on "Fat Bottomed Girls": "I almost forgot the night I offered my cock to two big women in a Camaro, feather joint clips, Jordache and feathered hair." And that's just the tip of the iceberg, chum.

So what if you're not an überfan who's spent a lifetime jerking off to the Queen canon (like Nester reveals himself to be on page 55)? You'll either come away from *God Save My Queen* believing it's a personal epiphany or thinking it's bunk. I've come to believe it's the former. ☺

GOD SAVE MY QUEEN

By Daniel Nester • Soft Skull Press • 140 pp. • \$21.50

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Second Life is second-rate

Esi Edugyan buries Samuel Tyne under overly bleak, self-conscious writing

By MALCOLM AZANIA
(MINISTER FAUST)

There's so much in the promise in the premise of *The Second Life of Samuel Tyne*. It's a debut novel by celebrated Ghanaian-Canadian writer Esi Edugyan (her name's pronounced "essy e-DOO-j'n") about the bridging of past and present, urban and rural, Ghanaian and African-Canadian. Set in the 1970s, it's written with a poet's attention to wordcraft—each sentence has been tinkered with and fussed over to the satisfaction of its master, much like the electronics repairs performed by its title character.

Samuel Tyne is a harassed, depressed civil servant plummeting into a midlife crisis. Upon hearing the news that his patron-uncle Jacob has died and left Samuel his house and land in Aster, Alberta (based on real-life Amber Valley, one of about 20 Alberta townships founded by African-American immigrants around 1900), Samuel quits his job and hauls his neurotic, nagging wife and brilliant, spooky twin daughters from Calgary to settle in Aster. Samuel wants a second life, one where he'll no longer be pushed around by lesser men at work or by his wife who's never really believed in him. Like Willy Loman, Samuel wants prestige, respect and liberty to enjoy life; like Willy, he's great with his hands. Unlike Willy, Samuel is an intelligent man and competent at business once neighbour and Aster town official Raymond Frank ("candid king of the world") sends customers into his store.

Also like Willy, Samuel has a wife who opposes his dreams. But in Samuel's case, that opposition isn't out of protectiveness so much as spite, small-mindedness and tininess of spirit. Maud Tyne has turned her back on everything Ghanaian—like Samuel, she's trapped by her past to point where she refuses to call her homeland "Ghana," instead using the imperialist name "Gold Coast." Like many immigrants, she's swallowed the notion of "modernity," that the Euro-American world is the ideal of historical and personal development, yet she's as uncomfortable in the promised land as she is within her own skin (if not skin colour). She despises her defiantly unassimilated neighbour, Akosua Porter, generally refusing to speak with her in any of the Ghanaian languages they share. Not that Akosua is a dream neighbour, being a snide, condemning, superior anti-Westerner who takes delight in nothing so much as her determination to take no delight in anything. Add into the mix two overbearing Euro-Canadian locals, Ray and Eudora Frank, the Tyne's daughters Yvette and Chloe who are incredibly (I mean that liter-

ally) erudite, eloquent and possibly evil, and their reluctant houseguest Ama (a French-Canadian schoolmate), and you have a quagmire of miserable people in a dying town facing the threat of a serial arsonist, a danger which pales compared to the rot inside each person's heart and mind.

THE SECOND LIFE OF SAMUEL TYNE is an exploration of death—the death of parent figures and the effect it has on the living, the death of career ambition, the death of sexual intimacy, the death of communities, the death of relationships and the

REVUE BOOKS

death of the future because of the corruption of children. It's a stunningly bleak treatise on lives riddled by indecision, second-guessing, mental quadruple-takes and the steadfast refusal to find lasting happiness or transcendent meaning in anything. Samuel, Maud and Ama are wracked by this soul-destroying inward gaze. The bossy, nosy Franks and the self-righteous Porters are apparently too simple to be self-reflective; the dreadful, brilliant twins Yvette and Chloe are so self-reflective that they're even more trapped inside themselves than their parents are, emerging from their

duoverse just long enough to strike out at the dull-witted humans who saunter past their mental crosshairs like carnival ducks.

These characters, like the novel they inhabit, are all deeply frustrated and frustrating. I'm frustrated with the book's unremittingly joy-mincing triage of family and town in which people are cloistered inside their own skulls, oppressive and arrogant, or sociopathic. I don't buy this world any more than I buy one in which family and town are uniformly thoughtful, kind and well-adjusted. The fussiness of these people and their total domination by regret, spite, pettiness or arrogance, makes for joyless and ultimately rather flat reading. The only surprise in this book is the extent of some people's badness. The message seems to be that people don't change unless it's to get worse—they can exchange homes and countries, switch languages and careers, but their only path is downward.

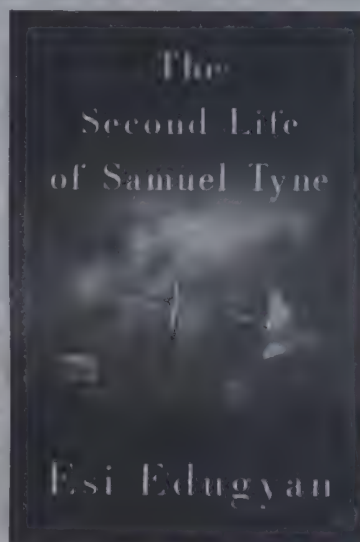
SAMUEL TYNE'S TITULAR "second life" isn't a life; it's the Greek underworld. Samuel "dies" from his Calgary civil service life, "descending" to the misery of Aster; he's tantalized by the prospect of a better life in the

pseudo-Elysian Fields, but discovers that, like Sisyphus, no matter how much effort he expends, every-

aloo as Samuel's demeanour, and its craft is so, well, *crafted*, that it's passionless. Only in theory do I accept that literary approach; for instance, one might imagine that the best way to convey a boring event is to write a boring chapter. But actually, that's a bad idea. *The Second Life of Samuel Tyne* strikes me as a very "English department" novel, its prose laboured over with great intention and attention, crisply and self-consciously "literary." I hope that with Edugyan's next venture, she assembles a more emotionally varied cast and invests the intellect and artfulness of her prose with emotions that extend beyond disappointment and desperation, as acclaimed fellow-B.C. writer Eden Robinson did so brilliantly in *Traplines*, crafting intelligent, emotional, beautiful prose that demonstrates how even in misery, hope and happiness can exist. There's no denying Edugyan's extremely refined skills; what's missing in *The Second Life of Samuel Tyne* is rawness, unrefinedness, and the honest admission that, believe it or not, some people live in joy and love. ●

THE SECOND LIFE OF SAMUEL TYNE

By Esi Edugyan • Knopf/Random House
• 336 pp. • \$34.95



thing is downhill. I just don't buy it. No one learns a damn thing in this book, not even the tragic lesson of learning too late where the wrong turn was taken.

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Mercury astronaut

Poet Daniel Nester takes a bizarre, deeply personal cruise through Queen's discography

By WHITEY HOUSTON



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THE SECRET to *God Save My Queen* is that Nester invites the reader to join in his own personal experience of the Queen discography. There, the cat's out of the bag. Y'see, by reading about Nester's poetic, song-by-song reflections on Queen's music you can't help but reminisce yourself. So

it's okay that you wanted a striped unitard in Grade 7. And it's alright that you and your friends drunkenly held flashlights under your chins and reduced beautiful Queen arrangements to hamfisted hollering into cellular telephones on precarious rooftops. It's okay that all you hear is backward-masked religious fervour whenever you listen to "Another One Bites the Dust." Nester goes so much farther and lays so much more on the line that even your most ribald memories will seem pedestrian by comparison. Oh Really? Yes, really! Here, for instance, is his entry on "Fat Bottomed Girls": "I almost forgot the night I offered my cock to two big women in a Camaro, feather joint clips, Jordache and feathered hair." And that's just the tip of the iceberg, chum.

So what if you're not an überfan who's spent a lifetime jerking off to the Queen canon (like Nester reveals himself to be on page 55)? You'll either come away from *God Save My Queen* believing it's a personal epiphany or thinking it's bunk. I've come to believe it's the former. ☺

GOD SAVE MY QUEEN

By Daniel Nester • Soft Skull Press • 140 pp. • \$21.50

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Trappers

A photograph of a baseball player in a white uniform with "Trappers" written on the front, running on a field. He is wearing a green helmet and has a determined expression. In the background, another player in a blue uniform is visible, slightly out of focus.

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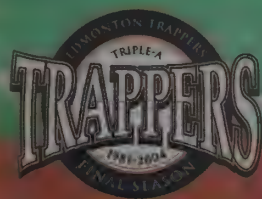
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DISH WEEKLY

PREVIOUSLY REVIEWED RESTAURANTS

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The smell of sea-dwelling lifeforms fills the air, and the East Coast music in the background makes me feel as though I've been suddenly transported to the Rock. I'm searching for the words to describe the dining area, a compact section featuring artistic depictions of fish and unsurprisingly, lighthouses. Then it hits me: "rustic oceanic atmosphere." (Okay, so that's what it says on the menu. So sue me.) Speaking of menus, I'm loving the Lighthouse's lunch edition. The level of sophistication is greater than I'd anticipated, what with the red Peruvian trout and Cajun prawn pizza. And the dinner menu is even more in-depth, featuring a list of stuff that makes my mouth water—paella, Hawaiian big-eye tuna, bouillabaisse and California striped bass with a mandarin fennel glaze. Very nice. And the wine list seems reasonably priced, too—I see a bottle of Australian Rosemount shiraz-cabernet is \$23 and I know the same bottle will run you about \$14 or so in the liquor store, so Billingsgate obviously isn't going crazy with the markup. Being the soup junkie that I am, I start off with a small bowl of lobster bisque. The lovely orange mixture is described as having been prepared in the traditional French style, with cognac, cream and rich lobster broth. Topped with some finely chopped fresh parsley, it's incredibly flavourful. Rich yes, but it doesn't weigh me down at all, which is good because I have a picklerel fillet on the way. (Note: you can get a bigger portion of the bisque as a meal. I saw one come out of the kitchen. Huge.) "That's a good choice," the server tells me as I order the fish, prepared in a tangerine butter and served with green apple relish. The large, colourful plate features the northern Alberta picklerel, a side of rice and a medley of vegetables. Not just your cheap, run-of-the-mill veggies, either, but a mix of red pepper, snow peas, zucchini, cauliflower, broccoli, carrots and squash. The picklerel is good and tender, the white meat flaking apart as you gently prod it with the fork. I'm missing something, though. And unfortunately, it doesn't dawn on me until later that there was no green apple relish on the side. Damn. It would've tasted great with the picklerel... which is probably why it appears on the menu in the first place, right? Still, I douse the fish with some lemon and it's just fine. **Average Price: \$\$\$ (Reviewed 11/13/03)**

CAFÉ ORLEANS

12208-Jasper Ave • 452-3160

The menu at Café Orleans has a wide variety of standard N'awlins-style food, which always turns my culinary crank. Kate starts with a spicy chicken salad, while I can't take my eyes off the chicken and sausage gumbo. A cup is \$4.95 but the bowl costs just a

buck more, and I've always been a sucker for the upsell. I'm soon having second thoughts about my decision, but not because the gumbo isn't satisfactory—on the contrary, the thick, hearty, ultra-spicy mix is a real attention-getter, leaving my nose a little runny and my nasal passages incredibly clear—but strictly because of its size. I take a few big swigs of my Buffalo draft to combat the lingering burn. The spicy chicken salad is generally a hit too, the crunchy candied pecans offering a textural balance with the tender, fiery chicken. One small beef about the salad: the orange vinaigrette is on the watery side and pools up on the bottom of the plate. Somewhere in the middle of the evening, it feels as though the ceiling is caving in. We speculate wildly as to what's going on until I remember that Arthur Murray's is directly overhead and Fridays are apparently a big night in Edmonton's dance class scene. The pounding subsides quickly and before I know it, our blackened lamb rack and rice and beans are at the table. The lamb, served with a cinnamon-flavoured sauce, is awesome—tender and perfectly medium rare with that strong, distinctive taste. As for the rice and beans... well, it's not the vegetarian dish I had imagined, what with the pieces of smoky-tasting sausage accompanying it. Not that I have a problem with that. We've already decided that the bread pudding is a must. It's a relatively light and delicious version of the renowned sweet, unlike the horrible clump of dense bread I sampled a few years back at one of the more popular downtown steakhouses. **Average Price: \$\$\$-\$\$\$ (Reviewed 02/16/04)**

CUL-INA

9914-89 Ave • 437-5588

A detailed explanation of renowned local chef Brad Lazarenko's new place comes in the mission statement printed right on the clipboard-style menu: "Your friendly neighbourhood restaurant serving ethnic comfort food, eclectic wines and crafty spirits." It's a more than apt description, and I can't help but think it'll be a hit based on atmosphere alone; the black and brown walls, oil paintings and metal ceiling fans create an environment that's at once classy and casual, a mood enhanced even more by the vintage big-band tunes emanating from the CD player. The menu's set up beautifully, with a small variety of categories like day dishes (culloina is open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and then reopens in the early evening), confection, caffeines, brews, wines and dinner dishes, the latter broken up into "small" and "large." The organic chorizo sausage, chickpea and tomato hotpot with grilled cornbread is a mouthwatering example of the ultra-affordable smaller dishes, while the larger Alberta beef flank steak with blue cheese and chocolate (for just \$15) looks like a winner from the list of bigger items. Oh yes, Sunday is family night and for \$20 per person, the cuisine is served platter-style. I go with a light special for that day: the halibut and avocado taco. It comes with a side of "green salad," which at culloina means a

mix of romaine, spinach, Edam cheese, fruit and vegetables with an orange ginger dressing. The taco is amazing. Large, browned chunks of halibut are inserted into the homemade soft shell along with strands of a yellowish cabbage and the avocado, with a bit of guacamole on the side. It's rich in texture but hardly heavy. And it goes real well with my Belgian Hoegaarden beer. The salad features grapes, pear chunks and corn and I get a subtle hint of the ginger in the dressing which each clean mouthful. **Average Price: \$\$\$ (Reviewed 04/01/04)**

DARIEN'S COCKTAILS AND FINE FOODS

5552 Calgary Trail South (Plaza 55) • 439-8675

Darien puts a lot of serious effort into his wings. He tells me his exclusive mix of spices for the various flavours on the menu is completely secret—he doesn't even tell the kitchen staff what they consist of. The variations are numerous: BBQ, honey garlic, teriyaki, salt and pepper, lemon and pepper, Cajun. Then you get into the heat: there's mild, medium and hot, and then you cross over into an entirely different realm with Chernobyl, Meltdowns and the mack daddy of 'em all, the Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns, which are served with—no word of a lie—plastic gloves and a waiver. Our group discusses wing protocol and decide that the six of us will go with some of the tamer varieties before we jump into a couple dozen Chernobyls and then a dozen Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns. We safely dance through the preliminary round but fear grips the table in anticipation of the killer wings to come. We all sign the waiver, whereupon Darien brings the wings over personally. (He's the only one who makes the Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns, by the way.) I can't say I've ever smelled such a scent—it's reminiscent of death. We suit up with the gloves and John goes for it. Steve does the same soon after, and following a helluva lot of deliberation, I munch on a drummie. How to describe the taste? Well, John, immediately begins to sweat. Steve is making alarming sounds I've never heard him make and I'm genuinely scared for him. As for me, the burn is beyond anything I've ever experienced before. Tears flow from my eyes and saliva builds up in my mouth at a sickeningly quick pace. Thankfully, we had milk with us, which was one of Darien's tips. Water and beer only add to the pain, he told us—a little-known fact that you'd do well to keep in mind if you're masochistic enough to try a Thermo-Nuclear Meltdown yourself. **Average Price: \$\$\$ (Reviewed 03/04/04)**

82 BBQ AND NOODLE HOUSE

9118-82 Ave • 448-9988

With the growing tickle in my throat letting me know sickness would overtake me soon, I decided I needed a big, spicy bowl of some type of Asian soup. Steve had heard there was a new noodle house down Whyte—and it seemed like the perfect remedy to the evil brewing inside me. The menu is packed with all sorts of standard Chinese fare and it's too bad we're just a pair popping in for a quick bite because the BBQ duck dinner for four (at what seems like a reasonable

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Might as well go for Zocca's

The last page of the restaurant listings yields some mighty tasty pizza

By DAVID DICENZO

Writing about food can be a complicated existence. It's not a job that consists of mere indulgence and subsequent reporting—the pre-meal groundwork is half the battle. How do I choose my destinations? Well, there's advice from friends, of course. I'll ask where they've been that's new or, more accurately, new and weird. Occasionally I just get in the car and drive until I spot something interesting. But after eating at hundreds of places over the years—many superb, many just holes in the wall that officially have a kitchen and make for a good story—I can get stuck for ideas.

So this week I left it to chance. I grabbed the yellow pages and started with the Zs at the end of the restaurant listings (I would've started at the As, but I was in no mood for Chinese, the style of the first dozen or so places in the book (AAA Chinese Restaurant and Lounge, followed by A Absolute Szechuan Castle Buffet....) The very last place on page 1,487 is Zodiac Restaurant. Problem: I've been there. I heard that they served pudding and went there right after enduring a nasty root canal.

Next to last was **Zocca's Pizzeria**. On Castledowns Road. I thought about packing a lunch for the lengthy drive out but figured I'd save room for what I hoped would be some delicious pie. I wasn't disappointed.

After the trek to the city's northernmost point (my cell's signal was gone), I walk in Zocca's to find a few old boys putting away some after-

noon pitchers. I grab a seat at a small table just a small leap away from the claw machine and the parquet dancefloor, which I'm certain is hopping on Saturdays (\$1.99 highballs for Ladies' Night). The specials sign reveals that you can get a \$50 bar tab for your birthday ("ask server for details," it reads) and I get sad

RESTAURANTS

when I realize I probably couldn't even drink enough anymore to use the damn thing up.

I can eat, however, and I bypass all the baked loaves, pastas and parmigianis on the menu and go straight to the pizzas. They come in medium and large and aside from the build-your-own options, there are also a few gourmet specialties—the Zorba (take a guess at the items on that one), the VIP (featuring a strange mix of salami and shrimp) and the Donair.

I go for the medium Cajun chicken, which features red and green peppers, onions, mushrooms, a special Cajun spice and diced chicken. Like one of the older gents sipping on his draft, I flip through the paper while I patiently wait for my meal. After a while, the barkeep/server pops by.

"It's coming," she says. "These are thick pizzas."

And she puts her two hands about three inches apart to give me an idea of what to expect. Right at that moment, there's a buzz at the bar. No, not like playoff hockey buzz or "How about that Phil Mickelson winning the Masters" buzz—I mean an actual buzzer goes off and I come to the correct conclusion it's all for me.

THE WASN'T KIDDING about the thickness. The pie comes out on a stylish old serving tray and I'm sincerely awed by its depth. It looks

more like a big quiche than your typical flat pizza—maybe even thicker than the server had claimed. The dough is moist on the interior but exceptionally crispy on the outside, just the way I like it. And the toppings are simply loaded on, from the chunky pieces of peppers to the hearty chunks of ultra-tender, spicy chicken. The unique thing is that they put a layer of cheese over the top, but not just a few loose strands of shredded mozzarella. This is a layer with uniform consistency, like getting the bottom of your car undercoated. It's a crust in itself and this pizza is one that most definitely requires utensils. The thought of sampling some three-for-one takeout crud after trying this gem just horrifies me.

Looks like I jumped the gun when I said I could eat a lot, though. I down just two pieces before I have to call it a day. The good thing is that I have twice that many slices left and now have no worries about my next two meals. Hell, the box is still heavy with only two thirds of the pizza left.

By the way, I've now made official appearances at the last three Zs in the listings—Zodiac, Zocca's and Ziveli Restaurant.

Zin's Seafoods, you're next. ☉

ZOCCA'S PIZZERIA

10807 Castledowns Road • 473-6339



DISH WEEKLY

\$65.75) looks tasty. Instead, we split a few dishes: the empire chicken, a BBQ pork chow mein and, to curb my spicy soup craving, a medium-sized bowl of the seafood hot and sour concoction. The server brings me a huge pot of loose leaf jasmine tea, helping me soothe the irritation in my throat prior to the main event. The food arrives quickly, starting with the soup. This hot and sour version has your typical tofu and strands of thinly sliced Chinese mushrooms, along with peas, shredded carrots, calamari and baby shrimp in an ultra-thick, almost gelatinous broth. For the short while that the soup remained hot (temperature-wise), my throat feels much better. After getting through a bowl or two each, the empire chicken and the chow mein arrive. The former, served on a small, oval platter with breaded chicken chunks, mushrooms, green peppers, carrots, water chestnuts, baby corns and peanuts, is supposed to be spicy. (It had the little red chilis beside the name on the menu, for Crissakes.) It's good, yes, but provides lit-

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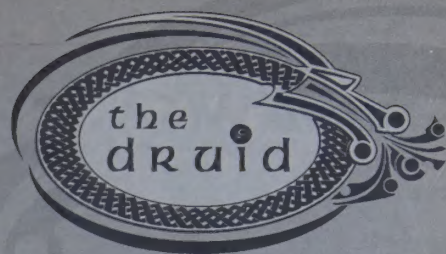
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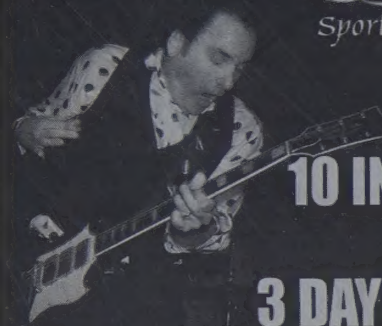
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DISH WEEKLY

tle in the way of a kick. I have to be honest—I wasn't too impressed with the chow mein platter, either. The amount of BBQ pork amongst the bok choy and other veggies looks scant and upon further digging, we find our initial assessment to be correct. I did like the crunchy noodles, however, a nice contrast to the rest of the dish. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 01/08/04)

FLAVOURS MODERN BISTRO

10354-82 Ave • 439-9604

You want brave? Try opening a restaurant a few weeks before Christmas, which is exactly what the owners of Flavours Modern Bistro have done on the famous Old Strathcona stretch. Sure, you get the Christmas push, but January is downtime for most establishments. Then again, there's a reason rents on Whyte are so high: never-ending traffic. I walked into Flavours (kudos to them on the inclusion of the "u," by the way), the former location of the Bagel Tree, and was immediately impressed by the look of the swanky new spot, what with the cozy blue chairs, dark hardwood décor (both tables and floor) and the high ceiling complete with oddly-shaped alcoves on the walls. I have an intelligent, concise menu in front of me, offering a selection of salads, apps, "flavourwiches" and a few tasty-looking entrées (oh, and two varieties of eggs Benedict). I almost bite on the braised lamb shanks with a white bean and lentil ragout but I always get lamb, so I go instead for the chicken pancetta sandwich (sorry, flavourwich), featuring a grilled chicken breast, pancetta, smoked mozzarella with a roasted red pepper and garlic mayo on multi-grain bread. Basically, it's a high-end "club." In a fowl mood himself, Steve selects the five-pecan crusted chicken, a real earthy-looking dish that was served with a brown pommary mustard sauce. More people begin to file in and I decide that Flavours is a solid addition to Whyte's dining scene and not just because people are trudging along in minus-40 weather to get there. I can't think of many, if any, places on the strip that combine such an obvious level of sophistication with so little in the way of pretension and overly expensive items. The well-proportioned dishes top out at about \$16 or \$17 while the top price on the wine list is about \$40 or so, instead of a starting point. You could easily spend more for less. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 01/29/04)

IL PORTICO

10012-107 St • 424-0707

Six years in the River City and I'd never given this house of reputedly choice Italian cuisine a go. I can't get over the complexity of the menu, which deserves some in-depth description. From tanta-

lizing apps like the beef carpaccio with fresh arugula and white truffle oil, right through to wildly creative entrées such as the pan-roasted, corn-fed, free-range chicken breast with lemon and rosemary, porcini mushroom risotto, parmesan fried zucchini and sundried tomato dressing, it all looks so inviting. Our attentive server, who has a fairly overt swagger and air of confidence that I figure pretty much comes with the territory, brings us two plates of olive oil and balsamic vinegar and some delicious crunchy bread to start. There's eight of us at the table but he suggests we pace ourselves and begin with the appetizer platter for four. And what a fantastic spread it is. The fried calamari is accompanied by a piquant dip, while the rest of the plate features bruschetta, mixed olives and a bevy of grilled treats, including prawns, Italian sausage, vegetables (eggplant, portobello mushroom and yellow zucchini) and a magnificent grilled radicchio starter stuffed with mozzarella and prosciutto. I see a couple of the popular pastas further down the table, one with linguine and a copious amount of shrimp, and another penne version with tenderloin tips and mushrooms in a spicy tomato sauce. I, like a few others, decide on the mahi tuna special. The pepper-encrusted steak is seared to medium rare perfection and placed on a bed of mashed potatoes, green beans and finely shredded carrots, which resembles a little nest. A thin butter cream sauce encircles the entire set of items on my plate and makes for a lovely presentation. We only order two sweets in total, but both are showstoppers. At one end is the cappuccino crème brûlée with Frangelico whipped cream and a chocolate biscotti. I take a pass on anything featuring chocolate, but only because I have a hunch that the limoncello sorbetto, with a raspberry vanilla bean consommé and iced blueberries, will offer one helluva clean finish. **Average price: \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$** (Reviewed 02/26/04)

MILL CREEK CAFÉ

9562-82 Ave • 439-5535

Other than a bevy of nice-looking sweets and baked goods, sandwiches are pretty much the order of the day at Mill Creek Café. Kate orders the Montreal smoked meat sandwich, while I eventually get around to choosing the salmon salad. Then come the questions. "Swiss, cheddar or cream cheese?" the counter girl asks. Kate says Swiss, I say cream. "Tomato, cucumber and sprouts?" Yup. "Pickles?" Sure. "Hot, honey or Dijon mustard?" Kate says yes to the former and after a bit of deliberation, I pass, figuring there's no need to add mustard to the salmon. "Mayo and butter?" Neither. Mill Creek bakes everything fresh each day and as I attempt to wrap my mouth around the massive slices of

grainy whole wheat bread with pieces of carrot in it, I think to myself that it looks awfully inviting. I had taken note of the fact that Kate asked for hot mustard and I patiently awaited her reaction. Sure enough, it came. "Whoa," she says after the first or second bite. It's actually really hot stuff—I try a nibble and some of the mustard actually burns a small nick on my lip. These sandwiches are huge and because baked goods are in our immediate future, we pack up the remainders and head back to the counter. This time, I'm only slightly more decisive—a piece of chocolate cherry loaf (a mere buck and change) and a slice of lemon meringue pie, though the chocolate peanut butter bars were crying out at me. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 12/04/03)

OVERTIME SOUTH

Whitemud Crossing (4211-106 St)
• 485-1717

I've been to the downtown Overtime in the past, but this version, once home to a Scruffy Murphy's, is definitely different. Sure, the numerous TVs and comfy little alcoves to relax in with friends are the same, and the Kevin Lowe paraphernalia is visible as a framed Team Canada jersey belonging to the Oil GM and part owner hangs at the bar. But other than the mini-humidor, the swank-o-meter hardly registers. No, this is a more proletarian crowd—couples, dudes in ballcaps and beer. Another thing that's different is the food. I recall a relatively in-depth, upscale bar-food menu at the downtown digs but Overtime South... Well, I'm pretty sure it's the old Scruffy's menu. There's your typical roadhouse fare of finger foods and sandwiches, with a Guinness pie and all-day Irish breakfast thrown in for good measure. I'm somewhat tempted by the latter, which has eggs, sausages, blood pudding, Irish soda bread and tomatoes, but I bail. The waitress lets us know that wings and mussels are on special and we end up trying some of each. We get a pound of medium wings, on for just \$3.50. "I like the sauce," Kate says of the plump wings. "It's buttery. And I like the mussels too." I agree. The wings actually have a good amount of meat on them, unlike many places that serve disgraceful, bony little things for their specials. Nothing at all wrong with the mussels either, as the white wine cream concoction has ample flavour and surprisingly, the focaccia is good. Nowhere near the same neighbourhood as my mother's, but light and airy nonetheless. We split the two ample pieces of fish and divvy up the ultra-thin deep-fried potato slices that represent the "chips" half of the equation. I was a little unsure of things when I first walked into Overtime South. It wasn't what I initially envisioned and the menu seemed like a step down from the original location. But you know



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DISH WEEKLY

what? The place is similar to the Oil throughout this courageous stretch drive in March—better than expected. **Average Price: \$-\$\$** (Reviewed 03/25/04)

SMOKEY JOE'S HICKORY SMOKEHOUSE

15135 Stony Plain Road • 413-3379
I figure—er, I mean, I reckon—Smoke Joe's was conceived as a replica of old-fashioned prairie cuisine, or at least an homage to it. License plates from all over the continent dot the walls and the menu, bound in wood, has headings like "Samwiches" and "Young Un's Dinners." The ranch theme is a little schmaltzy but for a guy soon to vacate the province, it's enough to bring a small tear to my eye. The coolest thing has to be the pink butcher paper they use for tablecloths—that's a nice touch. My comedic dining buddy Steve is along for this trail ride and he busts a gut when he spots the veggieburger on the menu. "I bet you it's never been ordered," he says. Well, neither of us are gonna be the first so instead, we put all our eggs in one high-cholesterol basket: the sampler for two. It includes, in no particular order, two roasted quarter chickens, pork ribs, turkey, ham, beef and two of Smoke Joe's famous ultra-hot wings. Oh, and garlic toast. "We're out of wings tonight so I'll give you another quarter chicken. Is that okay?" our host asks. Deal! You get your choice of three sides with the sampler so Steve and I agree on cornbread, beans and potato salad. I don't notice much green anywhere in the restaurant so we see no sense in having any on our plate. Back a century ago, a cowboy wouldn't have been clamouring for a side salad, right? I swear there's a strained look on our server's face as she lugs out the plate with what Steve refers to as "a pile of meat" on it. "There, go wild," she says. All of the homemade barbecue sauces are lined up in front of us—Smoke Joe's sells them on the premises, along a variety of the meats, including jerky—and it's time to get to work. On this snowy, frigid night, the platter gives me a much-needed dose of summertime. The spicy taste of the smoked meats, the richness of the beans

and the creamy potato salad make me forget that it got dark at 4:30 p.m. that day. **Average Price: \$\$-\$\$\$** (Reviewed 12/11/03)

TROPIKA MALAYSIAN CUISINE

6004-104 St • 439-6699
As we meet up in the front entrance of Tropika and I'm amazed by how packed it is this jumping Friday night. I've been here before and I loved it—but that visit was quite some time ago. Years, in fact, and it seems Tropika's gotten a lot more popular since then. And why not? With the straw awning over the bar, the big woven chairs reserved for VIPs and the Hawaiian shirts on the waitstaff, it's like island party central in here. Before we even look at the tantalizing food menu, we giggle at the depth and variety of the drink list. Doctor Funk (and Doctor Funk's Sun, made with 151 rum), Bellini, Scorpion—they all look good. Birthday boy John finds his groove when he orders a Tropikolada, a drink that apparently comes from heaven. "You couldn't come up with anything that would make me happier," John says after slurping up the last bit of what one table member calls "an Orange Julius with alcohol." I figure food will make us even happier. Right out of the gate, we try some starters: a dozen satays (pork, beef, chicken and lamb), five Indonesian spring rolls and two bowls of Singapore Laska, a hearty soup with vermicelli noodles. The crunchy peanut sauce goes well with the satays and the spring rolls are incredibly neat, stuffed with pan-fried pork, Chinese mushrooms and shredded jicama, then deep-fried extra-crispy with peanuts on the outer shell. The Singapore Laska is a feast with shrimp, tofu and fish cakes all married together in a tasty broth. My favourite, however, is the Kari Lembu, a sensational dish of melt-in-your-mouth curry with beef. We also ordered something known as Nasi Goreng, a local recipe of Malay fried rice and a few delectable side dishes, including steamed spinach and Sambal Bunchies, firm green beans with prawns and Sambal sauce. While each of these creations rocks (very spicy stuff), the most memorable item is the Sayur Lemak hot pot, which

comes to the table in a small kettle filled with vegetables and prawns simmered in a Malay coconut sauce. Oh, it was awesome, the broth so rich and colourful—by far the pièce de résistance. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 10/09/03)

WHITE SPOT

3921 Calgary Trail • 432-9153
True, the White Spot is a chain but it's a western Canadian one, which isn't so bad. Founder Nat Bailey was a crafty Vancouver entrepreneur who got the business up and running way back in the '30s, a few years after opening the country's first drive-in restaurant following a car ownership boom in the Lower Mainland. Smart guy. It's since expanded throughout B.C. and into Alberta, with the Calgary Trail locale being the only one of its kind in Edmonton (and the farthest east of any White Spots). This particular branch understandably has a bit of a hockey motif going on, with Original 6 jerseys displayed alongside some old-school metal blade skates and various pictures adorning the walls. I figure they must have that new Joe station tuned in on the radio. Someone told me it's "a mix of all sorts of crap" and when the rotation goes from old Depeche Mode to Macy Gray and then to Phil Collins's "Easy Lover," I'm convinced. I go big, passing up on some the staple breakfast items in favour of the renowned pancake sandwich, which the menu describes as a stack of buttermilk pancakes with an egg on top and a choice of bacon or sausage on the side. Whenever I indulge in some pancakes, I tend to wanna eat 'em up real fast. The reason being, pancakes get cold quickly. Not at White Spot, however. Your syrup comes to the table in a little personal dispenser—and get this: it's warmed up in the kitchen. That's such a simple touch but it honestly does cure the one and only problem I have with pancakes. It's like those glasses filled with fluid that you put upside-down in the freezer—the only problem with beer is that it gets warm, but in one of those glasses, it only gets colder as you drink it. These are ingenious ideas, people. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 02/12/04)

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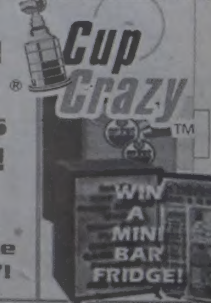
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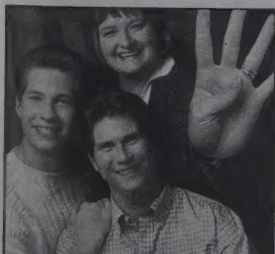
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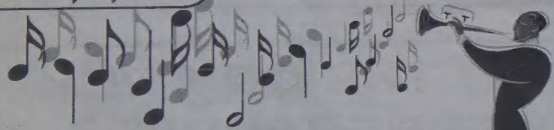
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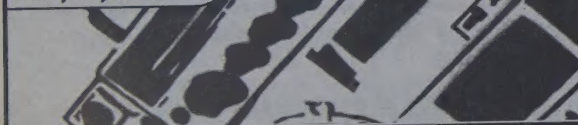
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ON THE COVER



Back in Black

The Pixies have reunited, and millions of indie rock fans rejoice at the news

By **DAVE JOHNSTON**

"I don't look back and say, 'Gee, that sure was a good time.' And I don't know why we would get back together. My agent hasn't called with a multi-million-dollar offer and I don't know if I would do it. It would call into question if I would be doing it for the money. I don't have a problem with other people doing it but, personally, I have enough money. I get to play the music I want to play and do what I want to do."

That's what Frank Black said to me back in 1997. The Pixies' label 4AD had just released *Death to the Pixies*, a retrospective compilation of the band's better-known tunes and it was one of the first interviews I ever did for *Vue Weekly*. Black had just exited a deal with American Recordings, who issued his first two solo albums, and was about to start up the Catholics. At the time of our conversation, he was ambivalent about what caused the Pixies to implode a few years earlier.

"Why did we break up? I'm not going to be dishonest with you by saying there wasn't negativity in the air when there was. The short version was that I was sick of it. It's really no big deal."

Black formally announced the dissolution of the Pixies on January 14, 1993, pointing to record company and management pressure to deliver a sixth album, which seemed impossible to do in light of his increasing battles with bassist Kim Deal. Legend has it that the rest of the band members were told everything was over by fax. Up to that point, Charles Michael Kitteridge Thompson IV was known as Black Francis. After that fax rolled through the machine, he became Frank Black. Everything burned. That monkey went to heaven.

Or did it? At the time of the breakup, the Pixies seemed on the



brink of greater things. They started the decade filling stadiums in Europe and opening for U2 in North America. After the Pixies died, the myth was born.

PERHAPS THE MOST FAMOUS quote about the Pixies' legacy was uttered by someone who wasn't even a member of the band. Nor did it roll off the tongue of a record company wag or a reverent journalist. It was Kurt Cobain. In a January 1994 interview with *Rolling Stone*, Cobain admitted that Nirvana's "Smells Like Teen Spirit" was his attempt to ape one of his favourite bands. "I was trying to write the ultimate pop song," he said. "I was basically trying to rip off the Pixies. I have to admit it."

In fact, hundreds, if not thousands, of bands owe the Pixies an enormous debt. Like the Velvet Underground who came two decades before them, the Boston foursome never sold a lot of records in their day, but nearly everyone who bought one started a band. The soft-loud dynamic, punctuated by Black Francis's seemingly nonsensical screams about spaceships and Mexican superheroes, is all but commonplace in rock music today, a part of the genetic code cracked by groups like Nirvana, Radiohead and Weezer, who took it and sold it back to the mallrats of the world. It's hard to believe that the Pixies' seesaw melodic attack used to terrify and infuriate people back in the day.

"Whenever somebody comes to me and tells me they started a band because of the Pixies, I don't get alarmed," the former Black Francis told me over the phone that fall evening. "Often I am respectful, thankful and awed by it—as cynical as I am. [But] I can't deny I wasn't influenced by other bands and their records. That's the way it works."

AND THAT'S HOW the Pixies started, really, back in 1986. Charles Thompson IV dropped out of his human anthropology course at the University of Massachusetts—a hallowed learning ground later immortalized in "U-Mass," from their last studio album, *Trompe le Monde*—and convinced his roommate Joey Santiago to do the same. The pair moved to Boston,